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THE WASTE LAND AS CITY

by

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A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

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DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

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OCTOBER, 1966.

When a man is tired of London, he is tired of life;
for there is in London all that life can afford.

Dr. Johnson

Falling towers
Jerusalem Athens Alexandria
Vienna London
Unreal

T.S. Eliot

Our problem being to form the future, we can only
form it on the material of the past. . . .¹

T.S. Eliot

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled THE WASTE LAND AS CITY submitted by Peter Cleghorn Montgomery in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

ABSTRACT

Kevin Lynch, in his book, The Image of the City, has devised a method of examining the city from the point of view of the citizens in the city. Lynch believes that a city which is designed or re-designed in such a way as to take into account the perceptual attitudes and requirements of those who live in the city will be a city that allows for maximum movement of people, both from area to area and within individual areas, and that requires only a minimum amount of effort at orientation by anyone who wishes to travel within the city. To determine the perceptual requirements and attitudes, Lynch examined the downtown areas of three major United States cities by establishing the image or spatial pattern which those who lived in the three areas had developed in their minds with regard to the city in which they lived. An examination of The Waste Land of T.S. Eliot using a similar method of spatial pattern analysis will help to clarify some of the complexities of the poem.

An examination of the milieu in which Eliot developed his ideas on city poetry, and a survey of Eliot's prose on the city will provide a background for the examination of the

physical, temporal, supra - temporal or mythic, and social spaces as they establish themselves in the poem.

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INTRODUCTION

In a short story written early in his London career, T.S. Eliot described two city-dwellers, who, having decided "to separate themselves from time to time, from the fields of their daily employments and their ordinarily social activities," rented rooms in a run-down district carefully chosen among "evil neighborhoods of silence. . . . It was a shady street, its windows were heavily curtained; and over it hung the cloud of a respectability which has something to conceal. Yet it had the advantage of more riotous neighborhoods near by, and Eeldrop and Appleplex commanded from their windows the entrance of a police station across the way. This alone possessed an irresistible appeal in their eyes."² From this vantage point the pair could observe offenders being brought to the station, and could, afterwards, go among the crowd that had gathered at the station and make observations about the individuals in the crowd. Appleplex gathered facts systematically, while Eeldrop collected impressions at random. Their desire, so Eliot said, was "to apprehend the human soul in its concrete individuality."³ The major part of the story consists of a Platonic-like

dialogue between the two on the soul, on social role, and on experience.

The approach of Eeldrop and Appleplex to the city suggests an interesting approach to The Waste Land, Eliot's first major poem. Such an approach would involve seeing The Waste Land as an attempt to focus on modern man as essentially a creature of the city, and a creature whose impressions are as important as his facts.

A similar approach has been used by Kevin Lynch in dealing with the city itself. He has published the results of a recent survey of three major downtown areas under the title, The Image of the City. The object of Lynch's survey was to determine what the city meant to its citizen in terms of subjective impressions. The end of the survey was to supply a plan of attack for redevelopment that would take into account the perceptual needs and attitudes of those who use the city. The theory was that a perceptually well designed city would allow for better location of, and travel within its different districts. The working elements which Lynch used in the survey; identity, structure, and meaning, he regards as parts of what he calls the environmental image:

An environmental image may be analyzed into three components: identity, structure, and meaning. It is useful to abstract these for analysis, if it is remembered that in reality they always appear together. A workable image requires first the identification of an object, which implies its distinction from other things, its recognition as a separable entity. This is called identity, not in the sense of equality with something else, but with the meaning of individuality or oneness. Second, the image must include the spatial or pattern relation of the object to the observer and to other objects. Finally, this object must have some meaning for the observer, whether practical or emotional. Meaning is also a relation, but quite a different one from spatial or pattern relation.⁴

In approaching The Waste Land it has seemed useful to take as a starting point Lynch's definition of the environmental image. Much work has already been done on the identity of the poem's various allusions, and the meaning of its difficult passages. Richard E. Knoll's recent collection of important critical material in Storm over "The Waste Land" testifies to the immense number of articles which have been published on various aspects of the poem.

If the poem, however, is regarded quite literally as a metaphor or objective correlative of the city, its structure can be reexamined, as, in Lynch's words, "the spatial or pattern relation of the object to the observer and to other objects." The value of such a study is that it must continually lead to the poem instead of away from it. When such an examination is made it becomes clear that Eliot's concern with the city as environment led to a metamorphosis of

poetic form. It is not enough to say merely that the city was his subject. The work of Appleplex in gathering facts, or determining identities and interpreting the meaning of the facts has been done. The recorded impressions of spatial structure or city pattern, the Eeldrop concern, remains to be examined. The form of such an examination may usefully take as its starting point the structural categories of the city, namely: physical, temporal, supra-temporal and social space.⁵

CHAPTER ONE

THE CONTEXT OF MR. ELIOT'S

CONCERN WITH THE CITY

Some Figures behind Mr. Eliot

Preoccupation with the city is not a new thing, even in English literature. T.S. Eliot inherited a growing awareness of the city as an ever increasing problem of size, ugliness, and social evil. This mounting concern with the city has been mapped out by J. Hillis Miller in its nineteenth-century literary context:

In the social and material worlds there are all those changes associated with the rise of science and technology: industrialization, the increasing predominance of the middle class, the gradual breakdown of the old hierarchical class structure, the building of great cities. The specific conditions of life in the city express most concretely the new mode of existence which is coming into being for industrialized man. From Wordsworth and Coleridge through Arnold, Baudelaire and Hopkins to T.S. Eliot and Apollinaire there is an increasing dominance in poetry of the image of the city. The poets tend to see the city as a vast agglomeration of bricks and people, in which "all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;/ And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell."¹

There has been just as much discussion of the city in Mr. Eliot's land of birth, as is amply demonstrated in Morton and Lucia White's The Intellectual Versus the City.

Nathaniel Hawthorne's Blithedale Romance contains a passage which indicates an acute awareness of the possible effects of the city on a person's sensibilities:

Whatever had been my taste for solitude and natural scenery, yet the thick, foggy, stifled element of cities, the entangled life of many men together, sordid as it was, and empty of the beautiful, took quite as strenuous a hold upon my mind. I felt as if there could never be enough of it. Each characteristic sound was too suggestive to be passed over unnoticed.²

Eliot himself has placed the American intellectual of the nineteenth century in his city context in an article on Henry James called "The Hawthorne Aspect":

Of course leisure in a metropolis, with a civilized society (the society of Boston was and is quite uncivilized but refined beyond the point of civilization), with exchange of ideas and critical standards, would have been better [than a world without leisure]; but these men [Emerson, Thoreau and Hawthorne] could not provide the metropolis, and were right in taking the leisure under possible conditions.

Precisely this leisure, this dignity, this literary aristocracy, this unique character of a society in which the men of letters were also of the best people, clings to Henry James.³

The first sixty-three pages of Herbert Howarth's Notes on Some Figures behind T.S. Eliot emphasize the fact that Eliot came from one of the best Unitarian families in St. Louis. His Unitarian background, however, probably did not predispose him to a life of leisure. Howarth's statement that "social work was the natural flowering of Unitarian morality, an attempt to regulate the world "(27) may indeed

indicate that Unitarianism was an important factor in the development of Eliot's social consciousness.

The nature of Eliot's social consciousness as it manifested itself in the field of literature is outlined in his article "Observations," written in 1918:

What we want is to disturb and alarm the public: to upset its reliance upon Shakespeare, Nelson, Wellington, and Sir Isaac Newton; to point out that at any moment the relation of a modern Englishman to Shakespeare may be discovered to be that of a modern Greek to Aeschylus. To point out that every generation, every turn of time when the work of four or five men who count has reached middle age, is a crisis. Also that the intelligence of a nation must go on developing, or it will deteriorate; and that every writer who does not help to develop the language is to the extent to which he is read a positive agent of deterioration. That the forces of deterioration are a large crawling mass, and the forces of development half a dozen men.⁴

This concern with the importance of language to society is, no doubt, one of the reasons for Eliot's continued interest in the writings of Irving Babbitt, whom, as Howarth notes, Eliot had as one of his first graduate instructors at Harvard:

In place of the prevailing values of the time, he [Babbitt] offered the values of certain nations at certain moments the most propitious in their history, and doctrines by which a writer might assimilate and communicate them. Eliot, coming to him in that receptive year [1909], heard at his table and read in his book [Literature and the American College] the doctrine of classicism and the complementary doctrine of tradition.⁵

His involvement with Babbitt led to Eliot's understanding

of the past as a means of creating the future, as a means of contact with the city of modern man:

Mr. Babbitt is a stout upholder of tradition and continuity, and he knows, with all his immense and encyclopedic information, that the Christian religion is an essential part of the history of our race. . . . Our problem being to form the future, we can only form it on the materials of the past; we must use our heredity, instead of denying it. The religious habits of the race are still very strong, in all places, at all times, and for all people.⁶

The literature of the past was important to Eliot as an instrument for the development of intelligence, in the struggle against intellectual decay:

I believe that the modern tendency is toward something which, for want of a better name, we may call classicism. I use the term with hesitation, for it is hardly more than analogical: we must scrupulously guard ourselves against measuring living art and mind by dead laws of order. Art reflects the transitory as well as the permanent condition of the soul; we cannot wholly measure the present by what the past has been, or by what we think the future ought to be. Yet there is a tendency - discernable even in art - toward a higher and clearer conception of Reason, and a more severe and serene control of the emotions by Reason.⁷

The past provided an inheritance, a body of religious and intellectual habits. For Eliot, the past was not a binding set of rules but an aid to the development of modern consciousness. Perhaps the most important gift to Eliot from the past, outside of the English language, was Dante. Probably it was Dante who helped Eliot to understand what religious habits were inherent in Christianity. Certainly no

other figure from the past stands out so clearly in Eliot's attempts to understand the character of the religion which he saw as lying behind European, and consequently English civilization.

Howarth says that Eliot was "the foremost English advocate of Dante,"⁸ and lists two essays, the epigraphs to a poem and a set of essays, and Ash Wednesday as the determining factors of Eliot's "Dante-ship." Doubtless Eliot would deny having aimed for such a rank. What Eliot has meant to Dante is material for a student of Dante, and what Dante has meant to Eliot, Eliot himself has already stated:

The kind of debt that I owe to Dante is the kind which goes on accumulating, the kind which is not the debt of one period or another of one's life.⁹

The effect of Eliot's use of Dante on those who read Eliot is in itself an example of the use of one element of the past in the development of intelligence. That this development of intelligence is a matter of effecting mental habits is illustrated by the manner in which Eliot acquired Dante:

I read Dante only with a prose translation beside the text. Forty years ago I began to puzzle out the Divine Comedy in this way; and when I thought I had grasped the meaning of a passage which especially delighted me, I committed it to memory; so that, for some years, I was able to recite a large part of one canto or another to myself, lying in bed or on a railway journey. Heaven knows what it would have

sounded like, had I recited it aloud; but it was by this means that I steeped myself in Dante's poetry. And now it is twenty years since I set down all that my meagre attainments qualified me to say about Dante. But I thought it not uninteresting to myself, and possibly to others, to try to record in what my own debt to Dante consists. I do not think I can explain everything, even to myself; but as I still, after forty years, regard his poetry as the most persistent and deepest influence upon my own verse, I should like to establish at least some of the reasons for it. Perhaps confessions by poets, of what Dante has meant to them, may even contribute something to the appreciation of Dante himself.¹⁰

As will be seen later, Dante provided Eliot with a way of looking at the modern city, a way which has affected those who have agreed with Eliot's vision of the city as a place of desolation. It may be assumed that other areas of the past, such as English and European literature, history, and religion, as well as Greek, Roman, Hebraic, and Hindu tradition have been used by Eliot for similar purposes.

It should also be remembered that the effect of the past on modern intellectual development is not only through what the past has to offer but also through the way in which the past has offered what it has to offer. Clarity of language is important to clarity of thought, and clarity of thought to that intellectual vitality necessary to prevent a civilization from deteriorating into a waste land. Clarity of language depends on an awareness of the meaning of a word as it has developed from its sources. Eliot expressed this

idea with regard to James Joyce in his article, "The Three Provincialities":

Whatever words a writer employs, he benefits by knowing as much as possible of the history of these words, of the uses to which they have already been applied. Such knowledge facilitates his task of giving to the word a new life and to the language a new idiom. The essential of tradition is in this; in getting as much as possible of the whole weight of the history of the language behind his word. Not every good writer need be conscious of this - I do not know to what extent Mr. Wyndham Lewis has studied Elizabethan prose - Mr. Joyce at least has not only the tradition but the consciousness of it.¹¹

Eliot's strong attachment to the uses of the past explains, in part at least, his complementary interest in Irving Babbitt. The original reason for association with Babbitt was, however, possibly somewhat different, but also connected with Eliot's interest in the modern city. As Howarth mentions, Babbitt was teaching a course on "Literary Criticism in France with Special Reference to the Nineteenth Century."¹² Eliot wished to take this course because he had come to realize the importance of Baudelaire and Laforgue to the kind of poetry he wanted to write.¹³

Eliot has said that Jules Laforgue, as a modern poet, influenced him more than Baudelaire,¹⁴ and, indeed, more than any one poet in any language.¹⁵ Later in the same volume he explains the exact nature of the influence of these two French poets as being such that it helped him to realize what he

wanted to write about, and how he wanted to do that writing.

It was Jules Laforgue who first showed him the "poetic possibilities" of his "own idiom" and because of a like temperament, assisted Eliot to find his own form. Baudelaire showed Eliot the city:

I think that from Baudelaire I learned first, a precedent for the poetical possibilities, never developed by any poet writing in my own language, of the more sordid aspects of the modern metropolis, of the possibility of fusion between the sordidly realistic and the phantasmagoric, the possibility of the juxtaposition of the matter-of-fact and the fantastic. From him, as from Laforgue, I learned that the sort of material that I had, the sort of experience that an adolescent had had, in an industrial city in America, could be the material for poetry; and that the source of new poetry might be found in what had been regarded hitherto as the impossible, the sterile, the intractably unpoetic. That, in fact, the business of the poet was to make poetry out of the unexplored resources of the unpoetical.¹⁶

It was with a sense of the city, the industrial city in French poetry and his own life, that Eliot came to Babbitt and learned the importance of the past in understanding such a city. As Eliot's remark that "the sort of experience that [he] had had, in an industrial city in America, could be the material for poetry," indicates, however, he did not forget his own personal experience. He expressed similar sentiments much earlier in a pre-Waste Land article, "Turgenev," to the effect that "a writer's art must be racial - which means, in plain words, that it must be based on the accumulated

sensations of the first twenty-one years."¹⁷ These sensations form an important part of the present from which a writer must divine the possible shapes of the future, in order to use the past to form in art the more advantageous of those possible shapes.

Howarth supplies many of the details of the St. Louis of Eliot's youth, the industrialized American town the experience of which provided Eliot with the material for poetry. St. Louis citizens were very proud of their city, previous to the turn of the century, the time of Eliot's childhood.¹⁸ This city had played an important role for the North in the Civil War,¹⁹ and looked forward to being "the Great Continental Capital."²⁰ It also had a great bridge spanning the Mississippi River that sent Walt Whitman into a reverie.²¹ However, two tragic events sent St. Louis citizens into a depression which Eliot, even as a youngster, could not have helped noticing. Chicago, not St. Louis, became the gateway to the west, and as a result St. Louis declined in population. The appearance of some parts of the city decayed.²² Howarth quotes Theodore Dreiser's description of a visit to St. Louis in 1892 when Eliot was an observant four years old:

A smoky Monday morning presented "little low houses. . . the darksome character of the stores. . . . Never in my life had I seen such old buildings, all brick and crowded together.

. . . Their interiors seemed so dark, so redolent of old time life. The streets also appeared old-fashioned with their cobblestones, their twists and turns and the very little space that lay between the curbs. I felt as though the people must be different from those in Chicago, less dynamic, less aggressive."²³

To compound the trouble, corruption, found in high places, led to exposure in 1902. The publication of St. Louis' shame in a humiliating article was the first chapter in a series of exposures of other cities made by Lincoln Steffens and collected in his book, The Shame of the Cities brought out in 1904.²⁴ According to Howarth, this scandal had a definite effect on Eliot's fellow poet and expatriate, Ezra Pound:

A line at the end of the Pisan Cantos speaks of "Stef" as if he were a mentor or a fraternal figure. Pound was seventeen when the scandals of 1902 broke. His polemic of a lifetime might be regarded as an elaborate and labyrinthine extension of his quixotic reactions to The Shame of the Cities. In his poetry he has converted these obsessive reactions to triumph.²⁵

Several years later, in 1914, the scandal had not been forgotten, as it found its way into Percy MacKaye's Saint Louis, a Civic Masque, which can be seen as an indication that art was not unaware of its social duties, even on the civic level in the early twentieth-century United States.²⁶

Whether or not Dreiser was aware of the corruption when he visited St. Louis, Howarth does not mention, but he does supply a description made by Dreiser of the more progressive

part of the city:

Out in the west end, where progress seemed the most vital, were new streets and truly magnificent resident "places," parked and guarded areas these, in which were ranged many residences of the ultra-rich. The first time I saw one of these places I was staggered by its exclusive air and the beauty and even grandeur of some of the great houses in it - newly manufactured exclusiveness. Here were great gray or white or brownstone affairs, bright, almost gaudy, with great verandas, astonishing doorways, flights of stone steps, heavily and richly draped windows, immense carriage-houses, parked and flowered lawns.²⁷

This then, was the St. Louis which Eliot took with him when he left for Harvard in 1906, where he studied till 1914 with an intervening break of a season in Paris in 1910-1911.²⁸ The year, 1911, marked the publication of Eliot's first important poem, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," the name of which, perhaps, contains a hint that Eliot did not forget his home city; for, as Hugh Kenner, another Eliot critic, points out: "The name of Prufrock-Littau, furniture wholesalers, appeared in advertisements in St. Louis, Missouri, in the first decade of the present century. . . ."²⁹ At any rate, Eliot, after an attempt to attend university in Germany which he was forced to abandon because of the First World War, arrived in England where he was to learn even more about the writing of city poetry.

The more important influences on Eliot's thinking on the city when he arrived in London were Irving Babbitt, Dante,

Laforque and Baudelaire, and St. Louis. This is not to imply that Eliot was composed of these elements, as Howarth might, perhaps unfortunately, lead one to believe. It means, rather, that these elements were useful and rewarding because of Eliot's interest in them. What Eliot had yet to do was to learn to create a city poetry which would be an effective contribution to the development of modern intelligence. What Eliot had to do before he could accomplish his task, or even realize what that task consisted of, was to develop a sense of the present through contact with new literary forces.

Eliot's early statement with regard to Turgenev, that "the writer's art must be. . . based on the accumulated sensations of the first twenty-one years"³⁰ must be taken within the context of a corollary made at nearly the same time:

Any poet, if he is to survive as a writer beyond his twenty-fifth year, must alter; he must seek new literary influences; he will have different emotions to express. This is disconcerting to that public which likes a poet to spin his whole work out of the feelings of his youth. . . .³¹

Laforque, Dante, Baudelaire, and Babbitt were the acquisitions of Eliot's youth, his hard-won inheritance. Pound,

Lewis, Joyce, and the Vortex were the gift of the present, the "new literary influences."

Some Figures Around T.S. Apteryx

Eliot was assistant editor of The Egoist from 1917 to 1919.³² Twice in writing reviews for The Egoist Eliot used the pseudonym, Apteryx, and once, T.S. Apteryx.³³ Apteryx, according to the Encyclopedia Britannica is a kiwi, "the most unbirdlike of living birds," nocturnal, and of most unusual habits. Kiwis move about, using their long bills "to test the ground before them as a blind man uses a cane, noting their surroundings partly by touch and partly by smell." Their tiny, three-inch wings are "entirely without flying function, as the bird is heavier than an ordinary fowl."³⁴ This image of the kiwi indicates, perhaps, Eliot's concept of his own role in 1918. At least he presents himself ironically as some primitive myopic species of bird, poking about in a chaotic, war-weary world, and charting its surroundings in such a way that something of contemporary relevance might be saved out of European civilization. Eliot's own definition of this position with regard to Wyndham Lewis is, perhaps, equally applicable to himself:

The artist, I believe, is more primitive, as well as more civilized, than his contemporaries, his experience is deeper

than civilization, and he only uses the phenomena of civilization in expressing it. Primitive instincts and the acquired habits of ages are confounded in the ordinary man. In the work of Mr. Lewis we recognize the thought of the modern and the energy of the cave-man.³⁵

Lewis, himself, reiterated the statement in 1919 in his book:

The Caliph's Design: Architects! Where Is Your Vortex?:

The artist goes back to the fish. The few centuries that separate him from the savage are a mere flea-bite to the distance his memory must stretch if it is to strike the fundamental slime of creation. And it is the condition, the very first gusto of creation in this scale of life in which we are set, that he must reach, before he, in his turn, can create!³⁶

What developed from Eliot's experience of London was a freshness in his way of seeing the city as an object for poetry.

Eliot found his tradition in London by learning to take in the present with the total sensitivity of primitive man.

As the artist standing in the "first gusto of creation" Eliot learned to take in all times at once and to juxtapose them both one with another, and also with the present, and then to superimpose them on the image of the city. In this way, using the technique of simultaneity, he hoped to grasp the present in order to form the future; that is, to see, through art, the various shapes of the future made possible by the effects of the past, and focused in the present moment. The correspondence of Eliot's and Lewis's ideas on this point indicates the depth with which Eliot's thought became

involved with the Vorticist movement, which was championed by Lewis and advocated by Ezra Pound.

Eliot's entrance into the Vortex was, as Kenner points out, purely by chance. In effect, the outbreak of war forced Eliot to abandon his education in Germany and to head for England:

Eliot, equipped, in Pound's phrase, with "all the disadvantages of a symmetrical education," tumbled into the Vortex by chance. . . .

Three weeks after the outbreak of the war Eliot had made his way to England, where he proposed to redeem some of the wreckage of the academic year. The first visit to Ezra Pound's triangular flat, on September 22nd, was merely an incident in a year devoted to reading the Posterior Analytics with Professor Joachim at Merton College, Oxford.³⁷

The connection with Pound is a vital one. Eliot equates Pound with Irving Babbitt as a force in his life:

There were then two influences which are not so incongruous as might at first sight appear: that of Irving Babbitt and that of Ezra Pound. The influence of Pound at that time may be detected in references to Remy de Gourmont, in my papers on Henry James, an author whom Pound much admired, but for whom my own enthusiasm has somewhat flagged, and sundry allusions to authors, such as Gavin Douglas, whose work I hardly knew.³⁸

Babbitt's influence, which has already been examined, was able to find its expression in London, whereas it had before at Harvard been only an absorption of ideas. No doubt Pound's interest in the past strengthened Eliot's adherence to tradition and gave Eliot confidence that he was

writing the right kind of poetry. Pound's influence, however, as is evident from the quotation, did not merely strengthen ideas and convictions, it opened a whole literary world to Eliot. This world was composed not only of books to be read, but of art to be appreciated and of people to be met. Pound cultivated people. Wyndham Lewis has left an insight into the Pound-Eliot contact in the short article, "Early London Environment." Pound's service to his fellow men of letters is well described by Lewis. Pound was, perhaps more than anything else, a source of artistic inspiration:

. . . when I spoke of Ezra transacting his social life, there was nothing social for him that did not have a bearing upon the business of writing. If it had not it would be dull. He was a man of letters, in the marrow of his bones and down to the red-rooted follicles of his hair. He breathed Letters, ate Letters, dreamt Letters. A very rare kind of man. To fall into the clutches of this benevolent mentor was not the making of Mr. Eliot - for he had already begun making himself, after quite a distinct fashion, in "Prufrock" and other pieces. Here was a stiffening. Here were a variety of transformations, technical and otherwise. . . .³⁹

Pound also served by doing favors:

Ezra is not only himself a great poet, but has been of the most amazing use to other people. Let it not be forgotten for instance that it was he who was responsible for the all important contact for James Joyce - namely Miss Weaver. It was his critical understanding, his generosity, involved in the detection and appreciation of the literary genius of James Joyce. It was through him that a very considerable sum of money was put at Joyce's disposal, at the critical moment.⁴⁰

Pound served Eliot as well. Ernest Hemingway has noted

the movement which Pound started on Eliot's behalf, a movement called Bel Esprit:

The idea of Bel Esprit was that we would all contribute a part of whatever we earned to provide a fund to get Mr. Eliot out of the bank so he would have money to write poetry. This seemed like a good idea to me and after we got Mr. Eliot out of the bank Ezra figured we would go right straight along and fix up everybody.⁴¹

This service of Pound's may well have helped Eliot to appreciate the importance of the artist in a society normally not quite so generous.

What was most important in the Pound-Eliot relationship, however, was the world of people that Pound opened up to Eliot. This world of people extended beyond London to the other centre's of European creativity. Out of this cosmopolitan association came the knowledge of what the best writers of his time were doing, and, consequently, the opportunity to make use of their accomplishments. As Eliot himself said:

The serious writer of verse must be prepared to cross himself with the best verse of other languages and the best prose of all languages.⁴²

The lack of this contact was to Eliot a literary sin, as his

"London Letter" to The Dial of April, 1921 indicates:

But it is certain that culture does not reside solely in a university education, or in extensive reading; and it is doubtful whether culture is perceptibly developed by a busy life of journalism. A literature without any critical sense; a poetry which takes not the faintest notice of the development of French verse from Baudelaire to the present

day, and which has perused English literature with only a wandering antiquarian passion; a taste for which everything is either too hot or too cold; there is no culture here. Culture is traditional, and loves novelty; the General Reading Public knows no tradition, and loves staleness.⁴³

Eliot's association with Pound, then, strengthened his attachment to tradition, and brought him into touch with the living development of tradition. Eliot mixed with a vital, creative generation working together in a way which demanded of everyone involved a tremendous awareness of the present, of what was going on, of who was doing what. So important did this seem to Eliot that he started his magazine, The Criterion, not long after publication of The Waste Land, partly to maintain this creative all-at-once-ness on a continental scale. Eliot assumed that:

There existed an international fraternity of men of letters, within Europe: a bond which did not replace, but was perfectly compatible with, national loyalties, religious loyalties, and differences of political philosophy. And that it was our business not so much to make any particular ideas prevail, as to maintain intellectual activity on the highest level.⁴⁴

It is, perhaps, impossible to chart the totality of Eliot's involvement in the creativity of his time. One particular strand of that involvement can, however, be examined, Eliot's association with Percy Wyndham Lewis, whom Eliot met in the triangular sitting room of Pound's flat. This meeting is described by Lewis in terms which hint that Lewis was not

unimpressed with Eliot.⁴⁵ Eliot certainly came to be impressed by the work of Lewis, as the "London Letter" in The Dial of June, 1921 shows:

Mr. Wyndham Lewis, in his exhibition now on show at the [Leicester Galleries], is wholly conscious and deliberate in his attempt to restore [the] peculiarly English caricature and to unite it with serious work in paint. Mr. Lewis is the most English of English painters, a student of Hogarth and Rowlandson; his fantastic imagination produces something essentially different from anything across the Channel. I have always thought his design at its greatest when it approached the border of satire and caricature; and his Tyros may be expected to breed a most interesting and energetic race.⁴⁶

The importance of the tyros to Eliot's own attempt at creating a new Englishman, Sweeney Agonistes, will be examined in the section on social space. That Eliot was also impressed by Lewis's accomplishments as a writer, and probably learned something from him is evident in Eliot's view of Lewis's work in The Sunday Times (London):

In everything Lewis wrote there was evidence of a powerful critical intelligence, of an astonishing visual imagination. Finally, there is, in everything he wrote, style. I would even affirm that Wyndham Lewis was the only one among my contemporaries to create a new, an original, prose style.⁴⁷

Indeed, Eliot, early in his own career went so far as to define Lewis's place among modern writers:

I have seen the forces of death with Mr. Chesterton at their head upon a white horse. Mr. Pound, Mr. Joyce, and Mr. Lewis write living English; one does not realize the awfulness of death until one meets with the living language. M. de Bosschere writes a living French; and we can now probably also count as a living writer Miss Marianne Moore.⁴⁸

Impressive though his work was, Lewis was not so like-
able as a member of society. He himself has hinted at this:

Contempt on my part was always assumed, because a mania like Pound's to act as a nursery and lying-in establishment - bureau de renseignement and unofficial agency for unknown literary talent did involve the successive presence of numbers of preposterous people.⁴⁹

Ernest Hemingway's reaction to Lewis, as registered in A Moveable Feast is probably typical:

Wyndham Lewis wore a wide black hat, like a character in the quarter, and was dressed like someone out of La Boheme. He had a face that reminded me of a frog, not a bullfrog but just any frog, and Paris was too big a puddle for him. At that time we believed that any writer or painter could wear any clothes he owned and there was no official uniform for the artist; but Lewis wore the uniform of a pre-war artist.

.....

We had a drink of something and I listened while Ezra and Lewis talked about people in London and Paris. I watched Lewis carefully without seeming to look at him, as you do when you are boxing, and I do not think I had ever seen a nastier-looking man. Some people show evil as a great race horse shows breeding. They have the dignity or a hard chancre. Lewis did not show evil; he just looked nasty.

.....

About a week afterwards I met Miss Stein and told her I'd met Wyndham Lewis and asked her if she had ever met him.

"I call him 'the Measuring Worm,'" she said. "He comes over from London and he sees a good picture and takes a pencil out of his pocket and you watch him measuring it on the pencil with his thumb. Sighting on it and measuring it and seeing exactly how it is done. Then he goes back to London and does it and it doesn't come out right. He's missed what it's all about."⁵⁰

Lewis's unpopularity probably stemmed from his cold,

unsentimental attitude toward everything. He went around shattering everybody's minor gods. It would seem to be for this reason that his work has been on the whole ignored by all but the few who wished to put up with him. Among those few, especially at the beginning of World War One, were a loosely banded group of artists, writers, and other talented men. This iconoclastic group came to be known as the Vorticists. The manifesto-like magazine which came out of this group, and which was edited by Lewis, was called Blast. A full-page advertisement of Blast read:

Blast/ edited by/ Wyndham Lewis./ . . . First number will contain/ Manifesto/ Story by Wyndham Lewis./ Poems by Ezra Pound./ Reproductions of Drawings, Paintings, and Sculpture/ by/ Etchells, Nevinson, Lewis, Hamilton, Brzeska,/ Wadsworth, Epstein, Roberts, etc., etc./ . . ./ Discussion of Cubism, Futurism, Imagisme and all/ Vital Forms of Modern Art./ The Cube. The Pyramid./ Putrifaction of Guffaws Slain by Appearance of/ Blast./ No Pornography. No Old Pulp./ End of the Christian Era.⁵¹

The breadth of the Vorticist movement, in terms of adherents and of ideas, reflected the breadth of European creativity of the time.

Blast aimed at the destruction of "the 'academic' of the Royal Academy tradition" in England, and also provided "opposition to Marinetti, and. . . criticism of his 'futurist' doctrines."⁵² In describing Pound's reaction to Futurism, Eliot himself defined the nature of anti-Futurism as an

affirmation of the need for form in art:

Pound has perhaps done more than anyone to keep Futurism out of England. His antagonism to this movement was the first which was not due merely to unintelligent dislike for anything new, and was due to his perception that Futurism was incompatible with any principles of form. In his own words, Futurism is 'accelerated impressionism'.⁵³

Lewis's criticism of Futurism also dealt with its origins in the 1880 French Impressionist group, as in The Caliph's Design. Lewis especially found fault with the Futurist's sentimental attachment to machines:

The Futurists had in their *idée fixe* a great pull over the sentimental and sluggish eclecticism, deadness and preciousness of the artists working in Paris.

But they accept objective nature wholesale, or the objective world of mechanical industry. Their paean to machinery is really a worship of a Panhard racing-car, or a workshop where guns or Teddy bears are made, and not a deliberate and reasoned enthusiasm for the possibilities that lie in this new spectacle of machinery; of the use it can be put to in art. Machinery should be regarded as a new resource, as though it were a new mineral or oil, to be used and put to different uses than those for which it was originally intended.⁵⁴

Lewis's remark that "machinery should be regarded as a new resource" for use in art, shows a kinship of feeling with Eliot's desire to take the industrialized city as an object for poetry. This kinship of feeling resulted in the publication of two Eliot poems in the second issue of Blast and the association of Eliot, in the public mind, with the iconoclastic group. May Sinclair satirized Arthur Waugh's distrust

of Eliot in her article, "'Prufrock: and Other Observations': a Criticism". Her ironic tone of voice suggests that Waugh, among others, was being prudish about Eliot's experimentation:

But Mr. Eliot is dangerous. Mr. Eliot is associated with an unpopular movement and with unpopular people. His "Preludes" and his "Rhapsody" appeared in Blast. They stood out from the experimental violence of Blast with an air of tranquil and triumphant achievement; but no matter; it was in Blast that they appeared. That circumstance alone was disturbing to the comfortable respectability of Mr. Waugh and The New Statesman.

And apart from this purely extraneous happening, Mr. Eliot's genius is in itself disturbing. It is elusive; it is difficult; it demands a distinct effort of attention.⁵⁵

There are three important points to be understood in Eliot's association with Lewis and the Vorticists. The first point is the concern for form. A new age, the city age, demanded a form in art that could handle and properly manifest a totally man-made environment. The art consumer, it was felt, needed to be shown what effects the city as environment was having on him. The city was providing new patterns of perception for its dwellers, and, therefore, new artistic forms had to be developed to take into account and use these new perceptual habits. It was precisely Eliot's experiments, aimed at developing a form created out of city states of mind that bothered people like Arthur Waugh. And it was Eliot's association with the Vorticists and with their "experimental violences" which helped him to bring his own experiments to

fruition. The importance of experiment with perceptual patterns, in the work of the Vorticists, was accurately summarized in an anonymous article entitled, "The Death of Vorticism":

I shall not go into the detail of the vorticist improvement of the earlier impressionist systems; suffice it that in dealing with actual modernity the new art has proved its contentions, and that where actual knowledge of how the human eye is affected by colours and patterns in relation, where there is some standard of judgement other than that of half educated dilettanti, vorticist hard-headedness has made good.⁵⁶

A second aspect of importance to city art, in the work of the Vorticists, was subject matter. Lewis blasted the Futurists for not using the machine for artistic purposes, and for merely accepting the machine as an idol. Eliot had something similar to say with regard to art in general, and ballet in particular:

In art there should be interpenetration and metamorphosis. Even *The Golden Bough* can be read in two ways: as a collection of entertaining myths, or as a revelation of that vanished mind of which our mind is a continuation. In everything in the *Sacre du Printemps*, except in the music, one missed the sense of the present. Whether Stravinsky's music be permanent or ephemeral I do not know; but it did seem to transform the rhythm of the steppes into the scream of the motor horn, the rattle of machinery, the grind of wheels, the beating of iron and steel, the roar of the underground railway, and the other barbaric cries of modern life; and to transform these despairing noises into music.⁵⁷

The very machines which transformed the life of the city had to be transformed themselves into art. This transformation

was the very now from which the tradition of the race had to be drawn; this transformation, in other words, was the source of vitality in poetry which prevented that death of thought through dead uses of language against which Eliot wished to fight.

Eliot learned, through his contact with the Vorticists, to see the city as transformed by the machine, as transforming its citizens, and as transformable into art:

At the violet hour, when the eyes and back
Turn upward from the desk, when the human engine waits
Like a taxi throbbing, waiting,
I, Tiresias, though blind, throbbing between two lives,
Old man with wrinkled female breasts, can see
At the violet hour, the evening hour that strives
Homeward, and brings the sailor home from sea,
The typist home at tea-time, clears her breakfast, lights
Her stove, and lays out food in tins.⁵⁸

Man, in the presence of an ancient mythic character, becomes a machine. Not only is the image of man transformed, it is brought into a mythic context which subsumes or embraces the machine.

On the experimental level, "Preludes," "Rhapsody on a Windy Night," and the Sweeney poems are also attempts to transfer man into a modern, city context. They strive to stimulate some kind of life, some kind of sensitive reaction to the physical and social environments of the city.

"Preludes," and "Rhapsody," which were first published in the

second issue of Blast were "vorticist" poems.⁵⁹ The Sweeney poems, to be discussed later, were not uninfluenced by Lewis's tyro figures. Both sets of poems can be read as heeding of Lewis's command to stimulate life in the sense-depressing city atmosphere:

It is life at which you must aim. Life, full life, is lived through the fancy, the senses, consciousness. These things must be stimulated and not depressed. The streets of a modern city are depressing. They are so aimless and so weak in their lines and their masses, that the mind and senses jog on their way like passengers in a train with blinds down in an over-crowded carriage.⁶⁰

This command, in effect, explains the presence, in the midst of a congeries of city images, of four very moving lines (48 to 51) in "Preludes":

I am moved by fancies that are curled
Around these images, and cling:
The notion of some infinitely gentle
Infinitely suffering thing.

Nor was James Joyce mindless of what the Vorticists were doing. His Ulysses came out in serial form in the Little Review during and after the Vorticist period. Lines five through twelve of "Preludes" seem to be reflected in a passage of Ulysses:

And now a gusty shower wraps
The grimy scraps
Of withered leaves about your feet
And newspapers from vacant lots;
The showers beat
On broken blinds and chimney-pots,
And at the corner of the street
A lonely cab-horse steams and stamps.

The piece from Ulysses contains elements of transformation, and reactions to various objets de cité:

He passed the cabman's shelter. Curious the life of drifting cabbies, all weathers, all places, time or setdown, no will of their own. Voglio e non. Like to give them an odd cigarette. Sociable. Shout a few flying syllables as they pass. He hummed:

La ci darem la mano
La la lala la la.

He turned into Cumberland street and, going on some paces, halted in the lee of the station wall. No-one. Meade's timberyard. Piled balks. Ruins and tenements. With careful tread he passed over a hopscotch court with its forgotten pickeystone. Not a sinner. Near the timberyard a squatted child at marbles, alone, shooting the taw with a cunnythumb. A wise tabby, a blinking sphinx, watched from her warm sill. Pity to disturb them. Mohammed cut a piece out of his mantel not to wake her. Open it. And once I played marbles when I went to that old dame's school. She liked mignonette. Mrs. Ellis's. And Mr. ? He opened the letter within the newspaper.⁶¹

Eliot was certainly aware of what Joyce was doing as his article, "Ulysses, Order and Myth" in the Dial of November, 1923 indicates. This particular article provides information essential to an understanding of the supra-temporal, or myth-religion space of The Waste Land and will be examined in that section.⁶² It speaks of the use of myth to impose order on the chaos of modern experience.

Finnegans Wake, as the title suggests, (it's Finn again, so be awake) is a portrait of modern times as a return to the tribal conditions of the time of Finn. The tribal

aspect, or concern for the artist as neo-primitive, is the final point of importance in Eliot's association with Lewis and the Vorticists. As Lewis said, "the artist goes back to the fish." The artist is forced to perceive the original moment of creation before he in turn can create. The chaos of the modern city leaves the artist with no choice other than a primitive approach in his efforts to impose order. Modern man requires total artistic recreation.

In the Lewisian sense, man, the machine-builder, finds himself in a primordial chaos of machinery which sets off his animal origins in an ape-like caricature. Lewis wondered if the artist will (for Lewis, only the artist possibly could) recreate man as a descendent of the machine:

Will [man] arrive where there is no power, enjoyment or organization of which other living beings have been capable of which he will not, in his turn, and by a huge mechanical effort, possess the means? If he is amused enough with his mind to give that carte blanche, his individual existence as an ape-like animal will grow less and less important. As already his body in no way indicates the scope of his personal existence (as the bear's or barnacle's indicates theirs) it cannot anymore in pictorial art be used as his effective delimitation or sign.⁶³

The image of the ape is reflected in Eliot's writings during the vorticist years in such names as Sweeney, Appolinnax, Appleplex, Apteryx, Phlebas, Eeldrop, and Eugenides. These are the new men, Eliot's versions of the tyros of Lewis.

Their caricaturish, machine-like, Greek names suggest that the machine has taken over their lives, and leaves their ape-like bodies in comical relief against the total, machine background.

Eliot's comment on Boston as uncivilized, his observation of Lewis as the cave-man artist, his description of city sounds as barbaric cries, and his condemnation of book reviewing "as a barbarous practice in a half civilized age"⁶⁴ are all hints of Eliot's tendency to consider the new age as primitive or neo-primitive. This insight is in itself that kind of transforming perception at which the Vorticists aimed. It is also an awareness of the historical condition of the present in relation to the past.

Eliot's statement, given earlier, that a poet requires new influences in his life if he is to continue writing poetry after the age of twenty-five, must be qualified by a similar statement made at nearly the same time. This second statement can be interpreted, with regard to his own career, as a realization that Eliot's experiences with the Vorticists had a direct relation to the thoughts about tradition which had been stimulated by Babbitt's observations and theories. In other words, in the modern primitive is contained simultaneously all that remains of the past:

[Tradition] cannot be inherited, and if you want it you must obtain it by great labour. It involves, in the first place, the historical sense, which we may call nearly indispensable to anyone who would continue to be a poet beyond his twenty-fifth year; and the historical sense involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence; the historical sense compels a man to write not merely with his own generation in his bones, but with a feeling that the whole of the literature of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order.⁶⁵

CHAPTER TWO

A SURVEY OF THE CITY IN MR. ELIOT'S WORK

A Survey of the Prose

Before examining The Waste Land itself it will be of use to examine the importance of the city in Mr. Eliot's work as a whole. In this way The Waste Land will appear in the context of a total achievement. Since Eliot's prose and verse each play a distinct role in his work it will be easier to examine them separately.

The chief characteristic of Eliot's work, considered as a whole, is a particular concern with language. Eliot said, early in his London career, "that every writer who does not help to develop the language is to the extent to which he is read a positive agent of deterioration."¹ This position he defined more clearly, later in his career:

We may say that the duty of the poet, as poet, is only indirectly to his people: his direct duty is to his language, first to preserve, and second to extend and improve. In expressing what other people feel he is also changing the feeling by making it more conscious; he is making people more aware of what they feel already, and therefore teaching them something about themselves. But he is not merely a more conscious person than the others; he is also individually

different from other people, and from other poets too, and can make his readers share consciously in new feelings which they had not experienced before.²

The poet makes present feelings more conscious, and creates new feelings, both of which he does through words. In the context of this statement The Waste Land can be said to be an attempt to make certain characteristically city feelings more conscious and to create new city feelings. In other words, The Waste Land can be viewed as an orientation of language toward the city. In terms of the work of Kevin Lynch, The Waste Land is a "spatial or pattern relation" which provides an objective correlative for the feelings of an observer of the city.³

Eliot's prose can itself be seen as an intellectual definition, a discussion in abstract terms of the kinds of feeling with which he is working in a poem like The Waste Land. In two of his "London Letters" to The Dial he has provided clues to an examination of his prose. A third clue is to be found in the first issue of Lewis's art magazine, Tyro. These clues are given in the form of direct mentions in one case, of material, and in the other two, of actual lines used in The Waste Land. Each clue appears in a different context, one artistic, one moral or social, and one religious. Eliot's prose can be examined from the point of view of each

of these categories.

One of the Waste Land references occurs in the "London Letter" to The Dial of October, 1921. It is a reference to The Golden Bough as being "a revelation of that vanished mind of which our mind is a continuation."⁴ It is such a reading of The Golden Bough Eliot had in mind, when, in the sentence preceeding, he said that "In art there should be interpenetration and metamorphosis." It is the question of interpenetration, of seeing as simultaneous different historical and mythological eras, which seems to be behind much of Eliot's thinking on the art of the poet.

Simultaneity or temporal interpenetration is an artistic way of seeing the past. It does not involve the abandonment of process but does keep the different phases of the process in contact with one another. In other words, simultaneity is a kind of living tradition, a way of keeping the modern mind in contact with, or within the continuity of, "that vanished mind." Eliot enlarged upon this idea when he said that:

He [the poet] must be quite aware of the obvious fact that art never improves, but that the material of art is never quite the same. He must be aware that the mind of Europe -- the mind of his own country -- a mind which he learns in time to be much more important than his own mind -- is a mind which changes, and that this change is a development which abandons nothing en route, which does not superannuate

either Shakespeare, or Homer, or the rock drawing of the Magdalenian draughtsmen. That this development, refinement perhaps, complication certainly, is not, from the point of view of the artist, any improvement. Perhaps not even an improvement from the point of view of the psychologist or not to the extent which we imagine; perhaps only in the end based upon a complication in economics and machinery. But the difference between the present and the past is that the conscious present is an awareness of the past in a way and to an extent which the past's awareness of itself cannot show.⁵

The process of artistic interpenetration, of giving the past a place in the present, is perhaps what is at work in Eliot's discussions of various writers. His essay, "Philip Massinger," is probably one such attempt. In speaking of the various critics of Massinger, Eliot notes that probably none of the critics, neither Coleridge, Leslie Stephen, nor Swinburne, "has put Massinger finally and irrefutably into a place."⁶ Eliot also outlines several strains of tradition in English drama:

In comedy. . . Massinger was one of the few masters in the language. He was a master in a comedy which is serious, even sombre; and in one aspect of it there are only two names to mention with his: those of Marlowe and Jonson. In comedy, as a matter of fact, a greater variety of methods were discovered and employed than in tragedy. The method of Kyd, as developed by Shakespeare, was the standard for English tragedy down to Otway and to Shelley. But both individual temperament, and varying epochs, made more play with comedy. The comedy of Lyly is one thing; that of Shakespeare, followed by Beaumont and Fletcher, is another; and that of Middleton is a third. And Massinger, while he has his own comedy, is nearer to Marlowe and Jonson than to any of these.⁷

Perhaps the same principle of simultaneity is at work

in the "Ben Jonson" essay. Eliot speaks at the beginning of the essay of the need to see Jonson "unbiased by time, as a contemporary."⁸ Eliot goes on to explain that a writer is valuable to the present only on the present's terms, not on the terms of the writer's time. This statement is probably the clearest example of the principle of simultaneity applied to any one writer:

And to see him as a contemporary does not so much require the power of putting ourselves into seventeenth-century London as it requires the power of setting Jonson in our London: a more difficult triumph of divination.⁹

Having set out the principle, Eliot goes on to discuss Jonson's work, and, at the conclusion, places Jonson in a twentieth-century milieu:

Of all the dramatists of his time, Jonson is probably the one whom the present age would find most sympathetic, if it knew him. There is a brutality, a lack of sentiment, a polished surface, a handling of large bold designs in brilliant colours, which ought to attract about three thousand people in London and elsewhere. At least, if we had a contemporary Shakespeare and a contemporary Jonson, it would be the Jonson who would arouse the enthusiasm of the intelligentsia!¹⁰

In the light of the principle of simultaneity, and again in the terms of Kevin Lynch, the modern city may be viewed as a patterned relation of experiences, which consists, in part at least, of the people and creations of the past. The Waste Land is Eliot's expression of the feelings which such a pattern stimulates in him. The Waste Land is, in

other words, Eliot's objective correlative for the modern city:

The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an "objective correlative"; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that particular emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked.¹¹

Eliot has himself described Baudelaire's creation of an objective correlative for the city; that is, Baudelaire's construction of an image-pattern which is the formula of a certain emotion stimulated by the city. It is in the pattern or image structure, put together so as to cause an interaction or intensity among the parts, which no part has of itself, that the formula for the emotion resides:

It is not merely in the use of imagery of common life, not merely in the use of imagery of the sordid life of a great metropolis, but in the elevation of such imagery to the first intensity -- presenting it as it is, and yet making it represent something much more than itself -- that Baudelaire has created a mode of release and expression for other men.¹²

Eliot emphasizes the words, "first intensity," to indicate that the image pattern created results in something new, something which did not exist in the particular medium used before, but which, by virtue of the new image pattern, exists in that medium now for the first time, and is peculiar to that medium. The peculiarity results because the images used, when so put together, can achieve an intensity, an

interpenetration, in that particular medium, which the inherent conditions of another medium would not allow.

According to Pound it was in this "first intensity," in this creation of an interpenetration of images peculiar to a medium, that Vorticism found its inspiration. Vorticism, was, in effect, a coming together of several creative minds who agreed on the principle of "first intensity":

Yet certain emotions or subjects find their most appropriate expression in some one particular art. The work of art which is most "worth while" is the work which would need a hundred works of any other kind of art to explain it. A fine statue is the core of a hundred poems. A fine poem is a score of symphonies. There is music which would need a hundred paintings to express it. There is no synonym for the Victory of Samothrace or for Mr. Epstein's fénites. There is no painting of Villon's Frères Humains. Such works are what we call works of the "first intensity."¹³

If the city itself were considered as an art form, as a bringing together of objects having a peculiar temporal and spatial pattern of relations, as Lynch in fact considers it, then it would reach "first intensity" when its pattern were so constructed as to achieve a peculiar interpenetration of the spatial and temporal qualities of the objects involved. What Eliot has perhaps attempted in The Waste Land is an interpenetration of certain spatial and temporal images already peculiar to poetic expression, but equivalent to certain spatial and temporal objects in the city. Not only are

the poetic images equivalent to the city objects, the patterns peculiar to each medium are also themselves equivalent. The Waste Land, considered as equivalent to, or objective correlative of the city, possesses spatial and temporal qualities which match the same qualities in the city. It would take as many Waste Lands to express one city as there are possible patterns in poetry equivalent to patterns in the city. At the same time it would take as many cities to express one Waste Land as there are pattern equivalents in the city corresponding to those in The Waste Land. The city has stimulated Eliot to create a pattern in poetry which, by recreating certain city patterns causes a metamorphosis of poetry itself. The Waste Land has, on the other hand, made it possible to consider the city as an art form. Eliot's work has, perhaps, resulted in an interpenetration and metamorphosis of both city and poetry.

A second clue to a consideration of Eliot's prose lies in his use of Baudelaire's phrase "Vous, hypocrite lecteur" at the end of "The Lesson of Baudelaire." This essay is especially important, not just because it uses part of a line more fully used in line seventy-six of The Waste Land: 'You! hypocrite lecteur! - mon semblable, - mon frère!': it is important because of the social implication of the word, Vous.

Eliot is in effect associating his readers with the situation in the poem and the lesson of his essay. The situation will be discussed in the section which establishes the point centre common to the various spaces of The Waste Land. It will be seen then that at the centre of the poem lies a moral situation. The lesson of the essay, that is, "The Lesson of Baudelaire" is that the best poetry is concerned with the examination of good and evil:

All first-rate poetry is occupied with morality: this is the lesson of Baudelaire. More than any poet of his time, Baudelaire was aware of what most mattered: the problem of good and evil. What gives the French Seventeenth Century literature its solidity is the fact that it had its Morals, that it had a coherent point of view. Romanticism endeavoured to form another Morals -- Rousseau, Byron, Goethe, Poe were moralists. But they have not sufficient coherence; not only was the foundation of Rousseau rotten, his structure was chaotic and inconsistent. Baudelaire, a deformed Dante (somewhat after the intelligent Barbey d'Aurevilly's phrase), aimed, with more intellect plus intensity, and without much help from his predecessors, to arrive at a point of view toward good and evil.¹⁴

There is of course a moral pattern in The Waste Land, as there is in a city. The pattern involves an interconnection between commerce, sexual love, and the machine. The dominant feature of the persons involved in this pattern is their inability to think, especially about moral matters. The burden of Eliot's discussions of society and morals in his prose is the self-imposed task of defining terms, not of

preaching a certain moral position. It is probable that, from his observation of the inability of people to think in moral terms, Eliot realized that the language itself, the terms used to discuss moral matters, needed to be clearly defined before clear thought could take place. Titles such as Notes towards the Definition of Culture, and The Idea of a Christian Society illustrate his concern for clarity of language. Eliot spends much time in the definition of terms in his series of lectures, "The Aims Of Education." In "American Literature and the American Language" Eliot examines the reflex influence of American and English speech forms and literary ideas on each other.

An essay very pertinent to Eliot's work on the city is his address, "The Literature of Politics," which contains a discussion of the term, determinism:

Determinism has a strong emotional appeal: curiously enough, it can appeal to the same type of mind as that which believes in the unlimited possibilities of planning. Determinism seems to give great encouragement, and at times access of force, to those who can convince themselves that what they want to happen is going to happen anyway, and to those who like to feel that they are going with the tide: and we have all heard, now and again, that freedom is to be found only in the acceptance of necessity -- though it is also natural to the human mind to suspect that there is a catch in this somewhere. But it should also be obvious to everyone from his personal experience, that there is no formula for infallible prediction; that everything we do will have some unforeseen consequences; that often our best justified ventures end in disaster, and that sometimes our most irrational blunders have the most

happy results; that every reform leads to new abuses which could not have been predicted but which do not necessarily justify us in saying that the reform should not have been carried out; that we must constantly adapt ourselves to the new and unexpected; and that we move always, if not in the dark, in a twilight, with imperfect vision, constantly mistaking one object for another, imagining distant obstacles where none exists, and unaware of some fatal menace close at hand.¹⁵

In so far as a poem like The Waste Land is an attempt to take the city on its own terms, the previous statement would suggest that the poem does not attempt to solve any problems, but rather, to chart them. Since the poem does present a resolution to its own tensions it does provide a principle of operation, an attitude of mind to be used in solving, or at least living with the problems of a city-oriented civilization. This principle, contained in the three words, Datta, Dayadhvam, Damyatta, (give, sympathize, control) of lines 402, 412 and 419 respectively, suggests an act of personal will coming after unbiased observation, rather than mere submission to a guessed at trend of the times. The Waste Land would, then, seem to be an observation or charting of both the conditions of the city and a possible attitude toward the city.

Unbiased charting, or observation, is, in effect, the definition of a situation. As will be seen, the basic social situation of The Waste Land is that of a mass leveling of

common difficulties which cut across previous social levels.¹⁶

One of those common difficulties is that very problem which inspired Eliot to do so much definition, the problem of a lack of clear moral thinking. In "The Classics and the Man of Letters," Eliot traces the problem of confused thinking, not to the schools themselves so much as to the effects of other forces besides the schools, forces which the schools are barely able to counteract:

No schoolmaster could afford the reputation of sending his pupils forth as ill-furnished as these men [Shakespeare and Bunyan] were. And there is too much to read for anybody to be expected to master, and to believe in, a few authors; apart from the fact that out of school there is every pressure to write badly, to talk incoherently, and to think confusedly.¹⁷

Eliot's concern was to define the position of the schools so that they could more effectively counter the disintegrating forces at work in society. This need for the definition of education was all the more pressing to Eliot because he recognized that the schools were themselves a cause of mass leveling, with which he was concerned in The Waste Land. In "The Romantic Englishman, the Comic Spirit, and the Function of Criticism," Eliot observed that "the public school pours into our illimitable suburbs" a "petrified product."¹⁸ Eliot's work with regard to schools may be seen as an attempt to refine the petrifactive forces out of

education. In his Idea of a Christian Society he explained what he thought would, in a Christian frame of reference, be a more vital education:

A Christian education would primarily train people to be able to think in Christian categories, though it could not compel belief and would not impose the necessity for insincere profession of belief. What the rulers believed, would be less important than the beliefs to which they would be obliged to conform.¹⁹

Another clue to a possible discussion of Eliot's prose with reference to The Waste Land is contained in his "London Letter" to The Dial of June, 1921. In a passage lamenting the proposed destruction of several London churches, Eliot uses a slightly altered form of Dante's line, "ed io sentii chiavar l'uscio di sotto/all' orribile torre" (Inferno, XXXIII, 36), which inspired, "I have heard the key/ Turn in the door. . ." (The Waste Land, 412-413.):

To one who, like the present writer, passes his days in this City of London (quand'io sentii chiavar l'uscio di sotto) the loss of these towers, to meet the eye down a grimy lane, and of these empty naves, to receive the solitary visitor at noon from the dust and tumult of Lombard Street, will be irreparable and unforgotten.²⁰

The translation of Dante's lines, according to the translated version recommended by Eliot, reads: "and below I heard the outlet of the horrible tower locked up."²¹ The lines suggest the enclosed space of a prison as in The Waste Land, 412-417.

The image of the prison, or the empty nave; that is,

the image of an enclosed space, is central to Eliot's metaphysic as inherited from F.H. Bradley. The image occurs in The Waste Land as "this decayed hole among the mountains" (386), "the empty chapel" (389), "our empty rooms" (410), "each in his prison" (414), and, "the boat responded/Gaily" (419). The space involved is enterable, and though it seems, like the prison, to have no exit, there is a suggestion that since the prison experience is the same for everyone, there is a possibility of a kind of transcendent sympathy. The boat is also a space which cannot be left, but it is a movable space which can be maneuvered, presumably, into contact with other spaces, and perhaps allow transference from one space to another. If this is the correct interpretation of the image, it corresponds to a philosophical observation made by Eliot in "Leibniz's Monads and Bradley's Finite Centers" published in the October, 1916 issue of The Monist:

The point of view from which each soul is a world in itself must not be confused with the point of view from which each soul is only the function of a physical organism, a unity perhaps only partial, capable of alteration, development, having a history and a structure, a beginning and apparently an end. And yet these two souls are the same. And if the two points of view are irreconcilable, yet on the other hand neither would exist without the other, and they melt into each other by a process which we cannot grasp. If we insist upon thinking of the soul as something wholly isolated, as merely a substance with states, then it is hopeless to attempt to arrive at the conception of other souls. For if there are other souls, we must think of our own soul as more intimately

attached to its own body than to the rest of its environment; we detach and idealize some of its states. We thus pass from the point of view from which the soul is the entelechy [function] of its body. It is this transition from one point of view to another which is known to Mr. Bradley's readers as transcendence.²²

Eliot's prose can be read as an attempt to define various constituent elements of a city-oriented civilization, especially the elements of literature, education, and religion; and to define them in their relation to the individual. In terms of the preceding quotation, Eliot is perhaps trying to define the situation of a group of souls as a whole, that is, as a particular society, in order that that society should know its bounds in its dealings with individual souls. Indeed, Eliot provides as an epigraph to his Notes towards the Definition of Culture, a definition of definition:

DEFINITION: 1. The setting of bounds; limitation (rare)-1483.²³

The Waste Land, as a city, provides a series of pattern relations, or structured spaces which allow for little exercise of will on the part of the individual. The people seem to be in a hell-like condition of will-lessness which causes them to appear grotesque or unreal. In his Idea of a Christian Society Eliot warned against the over interference of Liberalism in traditional social patterns within which the individual found protection; for the chaos resulting from

such interference could cause the reflex difficulty of over-control: "the artificial, mechanised or brutalised control which is a desperate remedy for its [Liberalism's] chaos."²⁴

A Survey of the Poetry

There are four general image patterns under which it is possible to examine the more pertinent aspects of Eliot's city poetry. These patterns range from a totally objective view of the city including the exterior and interior appearance of its buildings, to the more subjective aspect of the faces or appearances of the city-dwellers and, finally, their totally subjective pattern of consciousness.

Poems which seem to have as their main object of perception the external aspect of the city are: "Preludes," "Rhapsody on a Windy Night," "Morning at the Window," "The Boston Evening Transcript," "A Cooking Egg," the first three sections of "Five-Finger Exercises," and Part Three of "Burnt Norton." These poems, in general, tend to dwell on the less attractive appearances of the city. A city block, the horizon of evening, replaces the forest or plain.²⁵ Streets are usually seen at night when they are nearly deserted, and their lamps beat like fatalistic drums.²⁶ A general view of the city shows a boring sameness which tends to draw the observer

into some kind of vortex:

Streets that follow like a tedious argument
Of insidious intent
To lead you to an overwhelming question. . . .²⁷

The city is given a character not so much by particular buildings as by types of buildings such as Prufrock's "one-night cheap hotels/ and sawdust restaurants with oyster-shells";²⁸ or basement kitchens, as in "Morning at the Window."²⁹ And for the less reverent city dwellers there are too many bells, too many churches.³⁰

The unpleasant external aspect of the city is matched by its cluttered appearance inside. The walls in "Cooking Egg" are covered with old-fashioned pictures, while the speaker says, in "Portrait of a Lady," "My smile falls heavily among the bric-a-brac."³¹ Eliot, however, usually leaves city interiors unseen, since that is how the interiors strike most city dwellers. Apathy to surroundings seems to be characteristic of such people:

The eyes are not here
There are no eyes here
In this valley of dying stars
In this hollow valley
This broken jaw of our lost kingdoms³²

Environment, then, is involved with perception. A poorly designed living space results in apathy of awareness and the physical aspects of the city reflect the inner

consciousness of its citizens:

Only a flicker
Over the strained time-ridden faces
Distracted from distraction by distraction
Filled with fancies and empty of meaning
Tumid apathy with no concentration. . . .³³

The interior face is featureless. It is the face of "evening spread out against the sky/ Like a patient etherised upon a table"³⁴; "conscious but conscious of nothing"³⁵; unable to "bear very much reality."³⁶ There is yet the "flicker/ Over the strained time-ridden faces" which suggests that city-dwellers move with the remains of a conscious momentum built up from long forgotten origins, and become now a series of merely mechanical habits:

O dark dark dark. They all go into the dark,
The vacant interstellar spaces, the vacant into the vacant,
The captains, merchant bankers, eminent men of letters,
The generous patrons of art, the statesmen and the rulers,
Distinguished civil servants, chairmen of many committees,
Industrial lords and petty contractors, all go into the dark,
And dark the Sun and Moon, and the Almanach de Gotha
And the Stock Exchange Gazette, the Directory of Directors,
And cold the sense and lost the motive of action.³⁷

The emptiness of the interior face of the city-dwellers is reflected in their "strained time-ridden" external faces. The exterior is indeed little more than a mirror of the internal, empty stream of cliché consciousness as in "Prufrock," or "Portrait of a Lady," or "Gerontion." All we know of Prufrock are things such as his balding head and his neat

and rich, but modest, clothes,³⁸ things which indicate a mind concerned not with itself but with how it can impress others.

Other exterior faces, such as those of "Aunt Helen," "Cousin Nancy," or "Mr. Appolinax," are seen almost totally in terms of their environment. They are, perhaps, more acted upon and shaped by the city, than they themselves influence the city. "La Figlia Che Piange," "Burbank with a Baedeker: Blistein with a Cigar," and the Sweeney poems are also concerned, to a certain degree, with externals. The Sweeney poems provide, perhaps, a portrait of the new man who has learned to live successfully in the city.

Still other characters are seen completely from the outside, as the man and woman in the prose poem, "Hysteria," or the prostitute in "Rhapsody on a Windy Night":

The street lamp said, 'Regard that woman
Who hesitates toward you in the light of the door
Which opens on her like a grin.
You see the border of her dress
Is torn and stained with sand.
And you see the corner of her eye
Twists like a crooked pin.'³⁹

Such people seem more types of city-dwellers than anything approaching an individual like Prufrock. This is possibly the reason that they remain nameless.

Two special features of the external aspect of the city-dweller are the mob and the situation. There seems to be

little of mob poetry in Eliot's work. Both the term, and that particular aspect of society which it represents, may have seemed vague to him, and therefore something which should be treated with much care. The common empty mindedness of people who live in the city is a possible prerequisite for the mob; while the "insistent feet/ At four and five and six o'clock" ("Preludes," 41-42) are mob potential, as are "the readers of the Boston Evening Transcript" who "sway in the wind like a field of ripe corn."⁴⁰

Indeed, the mob, as it does exist in Eliot's work, is a potential mob. When it starts to take actual shape that shape is nearly always in terms of the traditional aspects of joy, amazement, and sorrow. Such a mob is the Chorus of Murder in the Cathedral, or the crowds and committees in Coriolan. Once, in Choruses from 'The Rock' there occurs a near-violent mob. Only the last example provides a case of a mass, self-willed, physical presence ready to move at the prick of some commonly perceived instigation.

Situation, or group experience, constitutes the final and most important factor in the external aspect of the city-dweller. The medium of the verse drama provides an almost ideal tool for dealing with group experience, for such experience involves consciously willed actions on the part of

those involved. These actions take place on both a purely social level and on a level which involves the working out of some personal destiny.

The Waste Land would seem to be, in relation to Eliot's other poetry, a transition from perception, or description of city experience, to involvement, or the willed actions of city-dwellers, as developed in the plays. That it is a transition is apparent from the willed action (give, sympathise, control) which is necessary to avoid absorption by the city. The Waste Land is Eliot's first poem in which willed action plays an important role, and the last poem in which the focus on city structural patterns is almost entirely on the perceptual or descriptive level.

CHAPTER THREE

THE CITY ASPECTS OF THE WASTE LAND

The Physical Space

The city in The Waste Land is London. It is possible, by charting the various place names which occur in the poem, to establish, in Lynch's words, "the spatial or pattern relation of the object," namely the Waste Land, for the observers or citizens of the city. Once the basic physical patterns of the area of action in the poem are located it will be possible to establish the space of historical or recorded time which the city includes, and next its area of myth, or supra-temporal space.¹ For the sake of clarity the examination will move from the simple pattern of the Waste Land's "city limits" towards its complex centre where London Bridge and the Thames cross. Once the temporal, and supra-temporal spaces have been established an examination of this centre will be possible.

The furthest point away from point centre to which a citizen of the Waste Land goes is a resort on the Starnbergersee in the Austrian Alps (8-10). Here the city is present

by its absence, because the vacationer in the mountains feels himself to be free of the complexity and dreariness of the city (17). The Starnbergersee is, then, the southern limit of the Waste Land.

Bradford, the home of England's new rich, is the most northerly point referred to (234), and is complemented in its money orientation by the most easterly point, Smyrna, the home of the foreign merchant, Mr. Eugenides (209). The western extension of the city is represented by Stetson, presumably a reference to the manufacturer of hats in Philadelphia who lent his name to the hat which symbolized the Old West of the United States (69).

Closer to the centre of the Waste Land there is another set of reference points which establish an inner circle. They have in common the function of being escapes from the complexity of point centre without being too distant from that point. They are used either for outings, as in the case of Richmond and Kew in the west (293); or as weekend resorts in the case of the Metropole in the south of England (214); and Margate in the East (300); or, again, as a typical suburb in the case of Highbury, only a few miles from the downtown area (293).

This inner circle has a pattern of relations which hints at the complexity of the point centre. Highbury in the

north, for instance, is a tram station and line, as well as a suburb, and therefore not unlike the rail line used to reach the Metropole on the south coast of England. Richmond and Kew, on the other hand, are at the western outskirts of the suburbs, on the Thames opposite to Margate at the river's mouth on the east coast. The north-south, man-made means of transportation is thus crossed by the natural avenue of travel, the river. This crossing reflects the similar crossing of man and nature, London Bridge and the Thames, at point centre.

The outer extension of the Waste Land is connected to the inner circle by the Smyrna merchant, Mr. Eugenides, who visits the Metropole. Richmond and Kew, via the Thames, provide a connection with point centre. Margate, on the east coast, leads out to the sea, and the sea in turn leads back in time to Carthage (307).

The area contained by the inner circle has two characteristics, one of flow and the other of place. The complexity hinted at in the outward areas has become so great at the centre of the city that it is no longer expressed in a more or less fixed pattern of relations but as a flow. Flow seems to move in the same direction as the Thames:

'This music crept by me upon the waters'
 And along the Strand, up Queen Victoria Street.
 O City, City, I can sometimes hear
 Beside a public bar in Lower Thames Street,
 The pleasant whining of a mandoline
 And a clatter and chatter from within²
 Where fishmen lounge at noon: where the walls
 Of Magnus Martyr hold
 Inexplicable splendour of Ionian white and gold.
 (257-265.)

Or, flow is at right angles to the Thames in a northerly
 direction:

A crowd flowed over London Bridge . . .

Flowed up the hill and down King William Street,
 To where Saint Mary Woolnoth kept the hours
 With a dead sound on the final stroke of nine.
 There I saw one I knew, and stopped him
 (62, 66-69)

In each of these experiences flow ends at a particular place
 and a particular time of day. This particularity creates a
 sense of involvement in the here-and-now.

The creeping of music from the west in lines 257 to
 265 which proceeds in the same direction as the flow of the
 Thames, becomes in lines 266 to 291, after the halt to con-
 template Magnus Martyr, the shifting view from the Thames
 itself. These lines consist of two verses, both of which
 seem to examine the same stretch of river. The first of the
 verses focuses on the dirty and commercial aspects of the
 river, while the second focuses on the historical connotations

of the river reinforced by the White Towers, or stronghold of the Tower of London (289). The white of the towers contrasts with the oil and tar (267) of the first verse. In effect what Eliot has done here, besides associating the temporal or historical space with the physical space, is to demonstrate a perceptual phenomenon. Two different awarenesses can be developed from an examination of the same area. Thus a further dimension of complexity is added to the image of the city.

There are three places within the inner circle which have only an indirect connection with flow: the place where a person is fishing on the banks of the "dull canal" (173-202), the Cannon Street Hotel (213), and Moorgate (296).

The place of the "dull canal" remains somewhat undefined. The canal referred to, in the light of the references to "the king my brother," and "the king my father" (191-192) is presumably Regent's Canal. The place on Regent's Canal where the experience is located is, again presumably, the entrance of the canal waters into the Thames, since the Thames is three times referred to in the lines which lead up to the experience (176, 183-184). What is important about the place is the very fact that it remains only vaguely locatable. It seems to be one of the many places which allow a

person to become almost lost because of the city's unplanned complexity. It is in a commercial area "round behind the gashouse" (190), and yet it is given historical overtones by the reference to the deaths of two kings. It is thus a suitable place for the contemplation of the decay of civilization; for such decay, as imaged by the rats, naked bodies, and bones (193-195), is easily associated with the complexity, verging on chaos, of a large city. So, although it is a convenient place within the city to get lost in order to think in peace, it provides ugly matter for thought; and, furthermore, it is not far from "the sound of horns and motors" (197) which are a continual reminder of the surrounding city. Such a place brings to mind Eliot's acknowledgement of Baudelaire who roused his concern with "the more sordid aspects of the modern metropolis."³

Both the Cannon Street Hotel and Moorgate are places of meeting near the city centre. Commerce dominates the Hotel experience, and love dominates the Moorgate experience. The means of associating these places with point centre varies. The hotel is associated with point centre by the images of unreality and brown fog which are characteristic of the central experience as it is portrayed in lines 60 to 76. Moorgate is associated with point centre by placement. The

Moorgate experience occurs between that of Richmond-Kew in the west and that of Margate Sands in the east.⁴ Association of image and placement in some kind of relation are, then, two ways of establishing location in the complex central area of the city.

The Temporal Space

The purpose of this section is to chart the extensions into the past used to create the temporal space of the Waste Land. This process of charting consists in pointing out those passages in which various cities of the past, especially the Londons of the past, are brought into contact with the city of the present. An old city which is also modern is a spot on which the remains of several generations have accumulated in layers. The city is a place for seeing what the past saw without having the same involvement in the vision as the past had. As Eliot said:

the difference between the present and the past is that the conscious present is an awareness of the past in a way and to an extent which the past's awareness of itself cannot show.

Some one said: "The dead writers are remote from us because we know so much more than they did." Precisely, and they are that which we know.⁵

The content of the present, or that which we know, is an awareness, an arrangement in consciousness of the past in such a way that the past has some relevance, some contiguity

with the present. The past is "that vanished mind of which our mind is a continuation."⁶

Place names having three different degrees of historical intensity are used in The Waste Land. The most important and most intense names are those of ancient historical cities which connect the Waste Land with the oldest western civilizations. Those place names of medium intensity have only vague historical associations. The least intense place names belong primarily to the present.

Among the names with least intense historical association are Smyrna, the merchant city of the East; the Cannon Street Hotel, a black market rendezvous; the Metropole, a cheap resort; Bradford, a mining town which created England's new rich; and Margate, another cheap coastal resort. It should be noted that while these names may have historical value in themselves, this historical value is ignored, or at least not focused in the poem. Smyrna, for instance, according to the Encyclopedia Britannica, "in ancient times one of the most important and now [1911] by far the greatest of the cities of Asia Minor, has preserved an unbroken continuity of record and identity of name from the first dawn of history to the present time." Its location "on the path of commerce between Lydia and the West raised it during the 7th Century

[B.C.] to the height of power and splendour." Because of its pride and degeneracy it was eventually weakened and overrun by the Lydians and organized by them on the village system. A river, the Meles, which flowed by Smyrna and which was worshipped in the valley of Smyrna, is connected by the "most common and consistent tradition" with Homer.⁷ Yet all this history, which even has a resemblance in its years of decline to the condition of the Waste Land, is of value only if it is already known when the poem is being read. It is doubtful, even, that such a man as Mr. Eugenides, whose home is Smyrna and whose name suggests sterility, would be aware of the historical and literary importance of his home.⁸ Only Smyrna's then present commercial power would interest him.

Those names which have a medium historical intensity, that is, some vague connection with the past, seem to include: Richmond and Kew, aristocratic names given to two nineteenth century flower gardens; Greenwich Reach, associated by name with the prime meridian used to establish longitude; the Isle of Dogs, a name with an Elizabethan aura about it; and the Strand and Queen Victoria Street, which have suggestions of the dignity of the late nineteenth century. Highbury suggests a Saxon burial mound, or at least a place of burial, and is given an even more suggestive quality by the ambiguity

of the word "bore," with which Highbury functions alliteratively in line 293: "Highbury bore me."

The names which have the greatest historical intensity are the names of cities. These names establish in a general way the limits of well recorded, basically non-mythological history, that is, they define the limits to which the Waste Land's temporal space extends.

The name London is the most important. Because its history is used in the image of point centre, that history will be discussed in the section dealing with point centre. The second most important name seems to be Carthage (307). Carthage is important not only because of its association with St. Augustine, and consequently with Christianity, but also because of its commercial character which is brought out several times in the poem.

Carthage was a trading port established by the Phoenicians who are known in history for their commercial prowess. The history of Carthage has been preserved in the minds of averagely educated people because Carthage was destroyed by Rome, whose history has been well taught. The destruction of Carthage was the result of the Punic Wars, during one of which Wars occurred a sea battle at Mylae (70).⁹ At stake in the Wars was the economic supremacy of the Mediterranean Sea, and

thus, control of the trade in the Mediterranean's various ports.

Eliot has tied the Carthaginian experience of success in trade and destruction in war to the commercial orientation of the modern city by means of Phlebas, "the drowned Phoenician Sailor" (47). Whether or not Phlebas died in the battle at Mylae is not stated. Phlebas did die by the water, whereon he had lived, and his death destroyed his orientation toward money. The experience of Phlebas, important enough to require a section all to itself, sums up in lines 312 to 321 the commercial character of the Waste Land. It is this character which dominates in Mr. Eugenides, the Smyrna merchant; in the "young man carbuncular. . . ,/ a small house agent's clerk . . ." (231-232); and probably in the Bradford Millionaire (234). The lesson of Phlebas is a lesson to all who are fond of money:

Gentile or Jew
O you who turn the wheel and look to windward,
Consider Phlebas, who was once handsome and tall
as you. (319-321)

In lines 372 to 377 Jerusalem, Athens, Alexandria, and Vienna repeat the experience of the rise and fall of the powerful city. These cities help to define, along with Carthage, the limits of the temporal space of the Waste Land. The

Waste Land extends as far back in time as cities have been known to rise and fall.

The Supra-temporal Space

The space established by place name and conscious or recorded time is the city with which Eliot is dealing. The more 'metaphorical' or exotic elements of The Waste Land constitute another aspect of that same city. There are many experiences in the city which are not as easily charted as the physical and temporal patterns of the city. The perceptual, religious, and social experiences extend themselves in complex spatial patterns which require some instrument of organization to make them intelligible. That instrument is myth. The social patterns extend themselves through myth to create a space which is basically one situation. This situation or social space will be dealt with in the next section. The perceptual and religious patterns extend themselves through myth to create a space which, because it is the meeting place of past, present, and future is supra-temporal. The present section will establish Eliot's myth technique with special reference to the supra-temporal space.

Perception is important as a means of learning the pattern structures of various objects which make up the image of the city. Perception as process then is a continuing

contact of the senses with some object or configuration of objects either at rest or in motion, a contact which results usually in a kinetic rather than a static visual image.

Sense contact with objects arranged in the patterns which make up a city, or sense contact with those patterns as reconstructed in art, result in an image of the city.

Perception, however, or the perceived image, not only provides sense knowledge about the object perceived, but also stimulates comparison with other images. As the images are brought together, they tend to illuminate one another. Such illumination takes place when the image of some particular myth is brought into contact with another image, be that second image mythic, aesthetic, or phenomenal. It is this technique of illumination which Eliot has used in The Waste Land, with one difference. The original object of perception, the city, was to him so chaotic that it could not result in an image. The material of that perception was therefore arranged in the pattern of a myth which allowed the interpenetration of myth image and city perceptions. Eliot has outlined this function of myth as it applies to the work of James Joyce:

In using the myth, in manipulating a continuous parallel between contemporaneity and antiquity, Mr. Joyce is pursuing a method which others must pursue after him. They will not be imitators, any more than the scientist who uses the discoveries of an Einstein in pursuing his own, independent, further

investigations. It is simply a way of controlling, of ordering, of giving a shape and a significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history. It is a method already adumbrated by Mr. Yeats, and of the need for which I believe Mr. Yeats to have been the first contemporary to be conscious. It is a method for which the horoscope is auspicious. Psychology (such as it is, and whether our reaction to it be comic or serious), ethnology, and The Golden Bough have concurred to make possible what was impossible even a few years ago. Instead of narrative method we may now use the mythical method. It is, I seriously believe, a step toward making the modern world possible for art, toward that order and form which Mr. Aldington [as classicist] so earnestly desires. And only those who have won their own discipline in secret and without aid, in a world which offers very little assistance to that end, can be of any use in furthering this advance.¹⁰

Myth, then, is a tool for organizing a group of perceptions which seem to have no total structure of their own into a workable pattern. When Eliot referred to "the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history" he was presuming the experience of early twentieth-century creative minds like his own. Myth was seen as a means of ordering, and thereby enriching, a perceptually chaotic and therefore depressing environment.

An environment which, on the other hand, is perceptually exciting will keep the mind alert so that it will react to the perception, and work with or against what it perceives. Eliot has provided an example of his own mind working on certain perceptions:

My local feelings were stirred very sadly by my first view of New England, on arriving from Montreal, and journeying all one day through the beautiful desolate country of Vermont. Those hills had once, I suppose, been covered with primaeval forests; the forest was razed to make sheep pastures for the English settlers; now the sheep are gone, and most of the descendants of the settlers; and a new forest appeared blazing with the melancholy glory of October maple and beech and birch scattered among the evergreens; and after this procession of scarlet and gold and purple wilderness you descend to the sordor of the half-dead mill towns of southern New Hampshire and Massachusetts. It is not necessarily those lands which are the most fertile or most favoured in climate that seem to me the happiest, but those in which a long struggle of adaptation between man and his environment has brought out the best qualities of both; in which the landscape has been moulded by numerous generations of one race, and in which the landscape in turn has modified the race to its own character. And those New England mountains seemed to me to give evidence of a human success so meagre and transitory as to be more desperate than the desert.¹¹

The relation between man and his environment is a two way relation. Men mould and shape their environment according to their needs, and are in turn forced by that environment to live within its structures and influences. When the environment is one like the city the protection from the elements and the ways of transportation tend to limit and direct action. The perceptual qualities of this environment will also affect both the mood of the city-dwellers and the basic pattern forms on which people living in the city can structure their thoughts. A perceptually poor environment will generate a deadened state of mind. The Waste Land is about one such perceptually poor environment. It is the same

environment in which Thomas De Quincey lived and suffered:

The life of this wanderer [De Quincey] is discontinuous both in space and in time. Since he is in the midst of infinite spaces, or lost in an endless urban labyrinth, all places look alike, and no place is related to any other place. He cannot remember the past because it had no meaning for him, and he cannot anticipate the future. To move from one place to another is immediately to lose what he has just left, and the man who is lost in a strange city has no way of knowing what lies in wait around the next corner. Even if he comes back by chance to the same place he will not recognize it, for everything looks the same, like the 'sand, sand, sand' of the desert. In this infinite space of wandering a man could be only a few feet from all he has lost, and yet not know it, so strict is his imprisonment in the present point of time and space.¹²

The perceptual environment of the city is largely determined by architecture. Other arts can reflect the condition of architecture and work with or against it, but architecture and design provide the major portion of city environment. Waste land means bad architecture, bad city design, bad interior design:

Architecture is the weakest of the arts, in so far as it is the most dependent on the collective sensibility of its period. It is so involved, on the other hand, in utility, and so much a portion of public life, that it is far more helpless than painting and literature in the face of public indifference.¹³

As Lewis's comment on architecture indicates, much of The Caliph's Design: Architects! Where Is Your Vortex? is an attempt to make creative minds aware of their social function. Lewis deplores the lack of vital thinking about architecture in the London of his time, and mentions that there is in that

city only one architect worth his salt, W.R. Lethaby. Lewis quotes from a book by Lethaby a statement which shows a remarkable similarity¹⁴ to Eliot's thinking on tradition:

We cannot forget our historical knowledge, nor would we if we might. The important question is, Can it be organised and directed, or must we continue to be betrayed by it? The only agreement that seems possible is agreement on a scientific basis, on an endeavour after perfect structural efficiency. If we could agree on this we need not trouble about beauty, for that would take care of itself.¹⁵

One of the things which particularly upset Lewis was the use of architectural styles such as the Greek, which had no significance in the modern city and promoted a false-front mentality, a two-facedness which is at best hypocritical and at worst very deceptive.

Walter Gropius, a German architect contemporary to Lethaby, placed a similar emphasis on architectural honesty:

For the last century the transition from manual to machine production has so preoccupied humanity that, instead of pressing forward to tackle the new problems of design postulated by this unprecedented transformation, we have remained content to borrow our styles from antiquity and perpetuate historical prototypes in decoration.

That state of affairs is over at last. A new conception of building, based on realities, has emerged; and with it has come a new conception of space.¹⁶

The new conception of space is important. Space is the most significant factor in city thinking. The city is a location containing many things and the product of many generations. All that they have in common is the space which

contains them. As the sections on physical and temporal space attempted to show, the area through which the Waste Land experience moves is such a space. For men like Lewis, Gropius, and Lethaby, honest architecture must reflect the growing tendency to think in spatial terms. In The Waste Land there is such an awareness, especially in the supra-temporal experience. This is apparent in lines 369-371:

Who are those hooded hordes swarming
Over endless plains, stumbling in cracked earth
Ringed by the flat horizon only. . . .

The emphasis on sameness of appearance in lines 331 to 359 is another way of expressing spatial awareness. When there is no detail to break up a scene, when there is only "rock and no water and the sandy road" then the spatial nature of the scene becomes apparent.

An important document in the trend toward honesty in architecture was W.R. Lethaby's Architecture, Mysticism and Myth of 1892, later republished as Architecture, Nature and Magic. Eliot's reflections on the New England country-side, and on the interaction of nature and man, resemble the "main thesis" of Lethaby's book: "that the development of building practice and ideas of the world structure acted and reacted on one another" and that "Nature was further the source of much of what is called architectural decoration."¹⁷ The

book is a discussion of the mythical significance of early architecture and design. There is much in it which can be used to elucidate the elements of the apocalyptic myth which Eliot uses to describe the modern city.

As Eliot stated in the article on Joyce, myth is a means of organizing experience. A return to the use of myth is what Wyndham Lewis meant by going back to the "very first gusto of creation."¹⁸ When Eliot described his use of Dante in The Waste Land he provided an insight into how he was using other myths to organize his experience of the city. Basically, the myth is used in such a way that, by evoking parallel situations in the reader's mind, it gives the modern experience a deeper significance:

Certainly I have borrowed lines from [Dante], in the attempt to reproduce, or rather to arouse in the reader's mind the memory, of some Dantesque scene, and thus establish a relationship between the medieval inferno and modern life. Readers of my Waste Land will perhaps remember that the vision of my city clerks trooping over London Bridge from the railway station to their offices evoked a reflection 'I had not thought death had undone so many'; and that in another place I deliberately modified a line of Dante by altering it - 'sighs, short and infrequent, were exhaled.' And I gave the references in my notes, in order to make the reader who recognized the allusion, know that I meant him to recognize it, and know that he would have missed the point if he did not recognize it.¹⁹

The myth pattern which Eliot has used to establish the supra-temporal space of the Waste Land employs fragments of

the apocalyptic writings of the Hebrews. Eliot has used this prophetic tradition of the apocalypse to create an analogy between the barren condition of modern city man and the predicted condition of man at the end of the earth. Eliot has not, however, used any particular account of the apocalypse. He has preserved only certain of the images which occur in the various writings. Together with the other images in the poem, the apocalyptic images are "fragments I have shored against my ruins" (431). They form "a heap of broken images" (21).

The passages which use the apocalyptic imagery are lines 19 to 30 and 322 to 395. The references in the footnotes to lines 20 and 23 are references to prophetic and wisdom literature, namely, the prophecy of Ezekiel and the Book of Ecclesiastes. Lethaby's Architecture, Nature and Magic quotes a passage from the apocryphal Book of Enoch, written about the same time as Ezekiel, which includes some of the elements used by Eliot:

'They carried me to a lofty mountain, the top of which reached to heaven. And I beheld the receptacles of light and of thunder. . . . I saw also the mouths of all rivers. Then I surveyed the receptacles of all the winds, the stone which supports the corners of the earth, also the four winds which bear up the earth and the firmament of heaven, the winds that turn the sky, which cause the sun and all the stars to set, the winds that support the clouds. I saw the path of angels. I perceived at the extremity of the earth the firmament of

heaven above it. Then I passed toward the south, where burnt six mountains formed of glorious stones; three towards the east and three towards the south. Those towards the east were of variegated stone. Those towards the south were red. The middle one (the seventh) reached to heaven like the throne of God; composed of alabaster, the top of which was sapphire.²⁰

The supra-temporal space is supra-temporal because it is a consideration of that aspect of the modern mind which is etherized or "vanished". As such, supra-temporal space has no definite orientation towards the physical or temporal space of the Waste Land. The city traveller has, so to speak, become lost; he has no coordinates by which to set a direction.

In the first experience of the supra-temporal space (lines 19 to 30) the place of its occurrence is somewhere in an undefined south. That it is in the south is suggested by line 18, "I . . . go south in the winter." Furthermore, as Lethaby indicates, from the various myths he quotes,²¹ the rocks in the south of the apocalyptic space are red, which fact ties in with Eliot's use of a red rock in lines 25 and 26.

The definiteness of "this red rock" would seem to indicate that the rock is a centre of orientation in the supra-temporal space. If so then the rock corresponds to the crossing of London Bridge and the Thames which are the centre of

orientation in the physical space of the Waste Land.

The supra-temporal space is enlarged upon in the experience of lines 322 to 423. Mountains appear in the distance (327), and are surrounded by flat, endless plains (370-371). The rock appears again in line 331 as a lower area leading up into the distant mountains. From the rock leads a sandy, white road (332, 362) which winds "above among the mountains" (333). Over the mountains appears a city in a condition of perpetual change (372). The use of "Unreal" in line 377 indicates that the reforming city is the unreal city of lines 60, 207, and 259. At the centre of the mountains, in "this decayed hole" (386) -- which echoes the definiteness of "this red rock" (25) -- is the empty chapel. Not far from this chapel are towers (383-384) which, like St. Mary Woolnoth's in line 67, keep the hours.

Lines 396 to 423 use Hindu mythology to organize the experience of a revival. Life returns when the holy river, Ganga, is refilled by its mountain springs (the empty chapel in the decayed hole among the mountains). The direction of movement had been up, it is now, by means of a boat, direction down to the shore (424) which, owing to similarity of phrasing, would seem to be the bank of the 'dull canal' of line 189.

On the supra-temporal level, then, The Waste Land experience, the experience of the city, takes place as a trip up and then down a mountain. Lines 382 to 385 suggest that this experience is the same as the temporal experience only inverted as a reflection in a sea. There is no water, however (331), so the reflection is in air:

And bats . . .

. . . .

. . . crawled head downward down a blackened wall
And upside down in air were towers
Tolling reminiscent bells, that kept the hours
And voices singing out of empty cisterns and
exhausted wells.

The inversion of image suggests a perversion of once meaningful things. Lethaby makes a few comments on the perverted use that modern building makes of once meaningful things, which suggest something of what Eliot may have had in mind:

Ancient architecture had a meaning and a message; it was religious, magical, symbolic and cosmical. It is the large content of it in these senses that makes it quite a different thing from the commercial grādeurs in the ecclesiastical and department-store 'styles' of the present day which we call by the same word, 'architecture'.²²

And:

A cousin sacred tree to the Ionic was the Greek grave stele or pillar with its volute and palmette crown. Both were sacred evil-repelling forms. The Corinthian capital was the last efflorescence of the symbolic tree. Greek columns were sacred things: we in our stylo-mania (in both senses) set them up to advertise shops. How are the mighty fallen!²³

Some discussion of the type of experience faced in the supra-temporal space of The Waste Land is necessary. As mentioned at the outset of this section the experience is both religious and perceptual. In the times which originated myth, the perceptual and the religious were undifferentiated:

A work of architecture was a cistern that held all that was poured into it of thought and intention and the old authentic things still to some extent preserve their content for us.²⁴

Eliot speaks, in line 385, of "voices singing out of empty cisterns and exhausted wells." In effect, the religious associations of architecture, of city environment, are dead, and the perceptual experience is lacking in orientation, moving toward chaos.

Lethaby describes the Mesopotamian Ziggurats which were imitations of a holy mountain leading to heaven, and which had a winding path around them leading to a temple.²⁵ Eliot's path leads to a city of "Falling towers" (374), and a disused, decayed chapel. Similarly, Lethaby points out the ancient use of a rock or a tree to locate the spatial and religious centre of a people. This centre provided a contact with heaven and protection from evil.²⁶ In line 23 the tree is dead, it has become the colonnade of line 9, and so there is no protection from evil. Nor is there contact with heaven, for the rain which used to drop from the tree branches to the

rock is gone. Doubtless the analogy will carry through the whole poem. What is the first part of Section Two: "A Game of Chess" but the heap of broken images mentioned in line 22. The dead tree bears no fruit and Lil bears no more children (159). The speaker of line 189 sits on the outskirts of the city contemplating the fearful event of his royal forbearers' deaths, imitating the ritual contemplation of fear under the shadow of 'this red rock' (26). Eliot has given meaning to the dead myths of ancient culture by using them to organize and reflect the dead state of religious and perceptual mind in the city.

The supra-temporal images also bear interpretation in terms of one another, for they are unified by a sense of death which reflects the chaos of perceptual and religious death in the city. First in line 19-20, there is lack of orientation, that is lack of roots. The modern city seems cut off from its traditions. Consequently, without roots there can be no branches for protection and guidance. If a tradition is dead it has no branches, no evolving form to keep life going, be it animal, cultural or spiritual life. All there is is the 'stony rubbish' of meaningless city buildings and pavement. This observation is made in the form of a question by the "son of man," which is an allusion

to Ezekiel. This allusion suggests that the speaker is, like Ezekiel, a prophet, only a prophet of the modern city, as well as the "son of man" or inheritor of all past civilization.

Lines 20-30 are spoken by the person addressing the prophet. This person repeats the observation which "son of man" has made but gives it more form, - the "stony rubbish" which is all the remains of civilization is a "heap" a "heap of broken images, where the sun beats." This "heap", a man-made heap like the Ziggurat, is probably the red rock of lines 25-26. The rock, in other words, must be the city dweller's only means of orientation, since the roots and branches, "the dead tree" which ancient man used both as symbol of life and as centre of the world, no longer has its symbolic meaning. There is no meaningful vegetation in the city. All that the rock of the city can provide is shadow, illusion, false front. The speaker invites "son of man" into the shadow, the meaningless facade (26). In that shadow "son of man" will not be able to see his own shadow made by the sun in the arid desert, but he will find a new source of unexpected meaning, namely, fear. The fear is in the citizens of the Waste Land, for they are the "handful of dust" (30), or the "wicked pack of cards" (46). Madame Sosostriis (43) is the person who actually sees the "handful of dust" in the form of playing

cards. She associates her listener with "the drowned Phoenician Sailor" (47), and, after she sees the other card - personages, she warns the listener to "fear death by water" (55). Death by water, then, is the fear in the handful of dust. The connotations of the Phoenician sailor would seem to indicate that the fear has to do with money (315).

The time orientation of the supra-temporal space is vague like the place orientation. The time is given as after life and in the process of death. (322-330). "The living death of modern civilisation"²⁷ seems to be the necessary condition of man in the Waste Land.

The process of ascending the rock (331-395) is the process of death. There is no water for life, no place to stop, no chance to think, and no solitude. There are "dry thunder," "red sullen faces," "mudcracked houses," and the sound of water made by the hermit-thrush. There is also an unaccountable hooded shadow, caused, like some neurotic habit, by an unknown force. After a cry of lamentation come more hooded figures, swarming over the plains like a disease spreading in a city. Then the city itself appears in a shape which is being continually destroyed and reformed. The black-haired woman, the baby-faced bats, and the inverted architecture give the city a grotesque appearance. Lastly, the process of

death leads to the chapel where there is only wind. The empty chapel is a sign of dead religion and forgotten heritage. The only relics left in the chapel are "dry bones" that "can harm no one."

The process of death, however, leads to Prufrock's "overwhelming question." The experience of the city forces the speaker into a confrontation with existence:

My life has been brought to an impasse, I loathe existence, it is without savor, lacking salt and sense. If I were hungrier than Pierrot, I should not be inclined to eat the explanation people offer. One sticks one's finger into the soil to tell by the smell in what land one is: I stick my finger into existence -- it smells of nothing. Where am I? What is this thing called the world? What does this word mean? Who is it that has lured me into the thing, and now leaves me there? Who am I? How did I come into the world? Why was I not consulted, why not made acquainted with its manners and customs but was thrust into the ranks as though I had been bought of a "soul-seller"? How did I obtain an interest in this big enterprise they call reality? Why should I have an interest in it? Is it not a voluntary concern? And if I am to be compelled to take part in it, where is the director? I should like to make a remark to him. Is there no director? Whither shall I turn with my complaint? Existence is surely a debate -- may I beg that my view be taken into consideration?²⁸

Thus Kierkegaard described the state of mind of a city-dweller.

One suspects, though, that the speaker in The Waste Land would not like to think of himself as indulging in self-pity. He pokes his finger, not into existence, for the finger and existence have nothing in common, but into the city. His finger cannot penetrate the rock of the city, but it can and

does feel the city's texture. The speaker knows: where he is, namely, in the city; who he is, a city dweller; how he got there, by his ancestors' efforts on their own behalf; and, what the world is, the city. The speaker knows he was not lured to the city, he was placed there; and he knows who built the city, many generations of men. If one complains there is apparently only one's self to hear the complaint. If one wishes or is even forced to remain in the city, then imagination must be used to make the city livable. Eliot's poem is an attempt to control the city by arranging his perceptions of the city in a mythic pattern. It may even have been Eliot's way of answering his own complaint.

The answer to the complaint, to the "overwhelming question," is the thunder. The final element in the process of death is a cock crowing, presumably to welcome the dawn in the East. Out of the east came the Smyrna merchant and the Phoenician sailor, both concerned with money; but also out of the East came the first signs of life, of man, his customs, traditions, and beliefs. So Eliot uses a mythology of the East, namely of India, to describe the process of the new life which follows cultural death in a city. This process of life is imaginative control of environment by the creative use of tradition:

Subjectivism, like urbanization and the failure of medieval symbolism, leads man back to an experience of the absence of God. But rediscovery of the autonomy of consciousness is associated with one more all-important quality of modern times: the appearance of the historical sense. And here . . . it is impossible to establish causal priority. Surely the sense of history is one of the causes of the experience of existential isolation, but withdrawal into the privacy of consciousness can also lead to an awareness of historical contingency.²⁹

The process of life is basically an act of will. One chooses whether or not to achieve creative control over environment. The first thunder, "Da/Datta" (401-402), indicates that the process of life is giving, a giving or submitting of oneself to one's condition so as to be able to work with it, a decision to come out of self-deception, out of shadow. Pride and commerce do not know of this kind of giving for they are based on shadows of reputation and printed values of money.

The second thunder, "Da/Dayadhvam" (411-412), indicates a process of listening and thinking, of developing an awareness of the now accepted surroundings. The environment is an isolating subjectivity. The city is a prison enclosing the world. But this subjectivity is a condition of all thinking people; therefore, one's own subjectivity is an awareness of the isolation of others. Thinking must be directed, not at getting out of isolation or at finding the key

to the prison, but at learning to be aware of other people while still in a subjective condition.

The third and final thunder, "Da/Damyatta" (418-419), is the enjoyable control of environment which submission and consciousness of other people make possible. A happy city is one designed to allow people to live together with full use of their perceptive faculties, a city which allows of imaginative response and which submits to imaginative development. As a place designed to promote other-consciousness it will have a meaning and a life which will be rooted in a principle of outward orientation and will have many branches, and much tradition, to shelter and direct it.

The Social Space

Eliot's awareness of the social aspects of the modern city, as manifested in the social space of the Waste Land, was the product of his critical attitude of detached observation and his attempts to develop a myth about the man of the modern city. The poet of the city must be a detached observer. He must be aware that the city, first made by its inhabitants, is producing a new situation and therefore a new type of man. It is one of the poet's functions to recognize and name, that is, provide an objective correlative for this

emerging type. In the 'Sweeney' poems at least and in The Waste Land Eliot is creating a new configuration of awareness.

The first important step for the observer of the modern city situation is detachment. The observer must establish a position relative to, but not dependent on the situation. This position has been defined by Wyndham Lewis. The artist, he says, must orient himself to the future:

There are . . . some men who seem to contain the future as others contain the past. These are, in the profoundest sense, also our men of action, if you admire that term: for, as the hosts of the un-lived thing, they are the impersonification of action. I think that every poet, painter or philosopher worth the name has in his composition a large proportion of future as well as of past. The more he has, the more prophetic intuition, and the more his energy appears to arrive from another direction to that of the majority of men (namely, the past), the better poet, painter or philosopher he will be.

A space must be cleared, all said and done, round the hurly-burly burly of the present. No man can reflect or create, in the intellectual sense, while he is acting -- fighting, playing tennis, or making love. The present man in all of us is the machine. The farther away from the present, though not too far, the more free. So the choice must be between the past and the future. Every man has to choose, or rather the choice is early made for each of us.³⁰

Eliot has defined a somewhat similar position for the critic in terms of the immediate future:

[The critic needs] a creative interest, a focus upon the immediate future. The important critic is the person who is absorbed in the present problems of art, and who wishes to bring the forces of the past to bear upon the solution of these problems.³¹

The person who fails to take a stand in the future, who is not detached, is one "who, at the moment when a new

view of life is wanted, has looked at life through the eyes of his predecessors, and only at manners through his own."³² Condemnation of a corrupt city official, without observation of the corruption of life at all levels of the present society is a useless occupation. The total situation must be observed, and in the light of principles relevant to the times. As Eliot says:

Contemporary literature, like contemporary politics, is confused by the moment-to-moment struggle for existence: but the time arrives when an examination of principles is necessary.³³

This examination of principles is a concrete thing, and possibly a painful thing, for principles coming from the past, and seen from the point of view of the future demand verification in the present. Eliot points out the importance of present experience with reference both to Shakespeare and to Dante:

Shakespeare . . . was occupied with the struggle -- which alone constitutes life for a poet -- to transmute his personal and private agonies into something rich and strange, something universal and impersonal.³⁴

Of Dante Eliot says:

The great poet, in writing himself, writes his time. Thus Dante, hardly knowing it, became the voice of the thirteenth century. . . .³⁵

To reflect the conditions of his time the poet must maintain his objectivity. If Shakespeare used his own

emotions, he stood away from them. He did not, more over, use a philosophy to understand them. He saw them as they were, for "it was his business to express the greatest emotional intensity of his time, based on what ever his time happened to think."³⁶ And although Eliot voiced this opinion several years after The Waste Land there is evidence that he was concerned about objectivity even before the writing of The Waste Land. In 1917, for instance, he observed in the poet, Jean de Bosschere, an objectivity ~~which abstracted from~~ all human emotions and which allowed room for the emotions of art alone:

M. de Bosschere never employs his thoughts and images in decorating ordinary human sentiments.

M. de Bosschere is in fact almost a pure intellectual; leaving, as if disdainfully, our emotions to form as they will around the situation which his brain has selected. The important thing is not how we are to feel about it, but how it is. De Bosschere's austerity is terrifying.³⁷

Not long after, Eliot made a similar remark with reference to Wyndham Lewis, in a review on Lewis's novel, Tarr:

In contrast to Dostoevsky, Mr. Lewis is impressively deliberate, frigid; his interest in his own personages is wholly intellectual. This is a peculiar intellectuality, not kin to Flaubert; and perhaps inhuman would be a better word than frigid. Intelligence, however, is only a part of Mr. Lewis's quality; it is united with a vigorous physical organism which interests itself directly in sensation for its own sake.³⁸

The present situation, examined objectively from the future, and in the light of principles constitutes the position

of the observer. The principles are the traditions of the past as verified in present experience, and as indicating future possibilities and consequences. The principles themselves, because operating in a formerly Christian milieu, are an inheritance from Christianity.³⁹ If these principles are to have contemporary relevance they must find expression in a new technique. Eliot noted in 1922 the lack of attention paid to technique by certain groups of poets:

As for the verse of the present time, the lack of curiosity in technical matters, of the academic poets of to-day (Georgian et caetera) is only an indication of their lack of curiosity in moral matters. On the other hand, the poets who consider themselves most opposed to Georgianism, and who know a little French, are mostly such as could imagine the Last Judgement only as a lavish display of Bengal lights, Roman candles, catherine wheels, and inflammable fire-balloons. Vous, hypocrite lecteur. . .⁴⁰

Eliot's own observations of the present situation resulted in the creation of a new mythic figure, whom he saw as emerging from that situation. This mythic figure, Sweeney Agonistes, was new because man, himself, who made the city, was, so to speak, being recreated by the city.

Sweeney Agonistes must be examined in some depth though his name occurs only once in The Waste Land. Sweeney is the unknown man of the immediate future to whom the other characters point, or in whom they have significance. Sweeney is the complex totality which sums up the situation of the

inhabitants of the Waste Land.

The first Sweeney poems appeared in 1918 ("Sweeney among the Nightengales") and 1919 ("Sweeney Erect") and are therefore products of creative activity which resulted in The Sacred Wood and The Waste Land. That Sweeney was intended as a mythic expression of modern man as product of the past and creativity of the future is indicated in "Sweeney Erect":

(The lengthened shadow of a man
Is history, said Emerson
Who had not seen the silhouette
Of Sweeney straddled in the sun.)⁴¹

Sweeney belongs to the race of tyros described later by Wyndham Lewis:

These partly religious explosions of laughing Elementals are at once satires, pictures, and stories. The action of a Tyro is necessarily very restricted; about that of a puppet worked with deft fingers, with a screaming voice underneath. There is none of the pathos of Pagliacci in the story of the Tyro. It is the child in him that has risen in his laugh, and you get a perspective of his history.

Every child has its figures of a constantly renewed mythology. The intelligent, hardened and fertile crust of mankind produces a maturer fruit of the same kind. It has been rather barren of late.⁴²

In an article "The Romantic Englishman, the Comic Spirit and the Function of Criticism" which Eliot contributed to Lewis's Tyro Eliot reviews the various myths which the Englishman has built about himself. This myth making tendency, Eliot observes, seems to have dried up:

Sir Tunbelly Clumsy, Sir Giles Overreach, Squire Western, and Sir Sampson Legend, who was lately so competently revived by Mr. Byford at the Phoenix, are different contributions by distinguished mythmakers to the chief myth which the Englishman has built about himself. The myth that a man makes has transformations according as he sees himself as hero or villain, as young or old, but it is essentially the same myth. . . . But in our time, barren of myths -- when in France there is no successor to the honnête homme qui ne se pique de rien, and René, and the dandy, but only a deliberate school of mythopoeic nihilism -- in our time the English myth is pitifully diminished.⁴³

To the family of Sir Tunbelly and Sir Giles, Eliot adds Sweeney. The abstract figure of the tyro is Lewis's contribution. Sweeney obviously belongs to the class of tyros, but he was invented before them and exists as myth in his own right. He is the image of the primitive barbarian, the crude, ape-like man. "Sweeney Erect" sets the figure of Sweeney in an elemental prehistoric background. Sweeney wakes in the morning:

Gesture of orang-outang

Rises from the sheets in steam.

This withered root of knots of hair

Slitted below and gashed with eyes,

This oval O cropped out with teeth:

The sickle motion from the thighs

Jackknives upward at the knees

Then straightens out from heel to hip

Pushing the framework of the bed

And clawing at the pillow slip.⁴⁴

Sweeney is an ironic projection. He provides an image which challenges the very concept of urbanity. He reveals the

possible direction which a release of the primitive unconscious may take in the city environment. He embodies the desire for freedom and force. He is amoral and uninhibited but he is alive. As an image he answers a fundamental need. As Eliot says in the same essay:

Man desires to see himself on the stage, more admirable, more forceful, more villainous, more comical, more despicable -- and more much else -- than he actually is. He has only the opportunity of seeing himself, sometimes, a little better dressed. The romantic Englishman is in a bad way.

The Englishman, Eliot points out, has an ambiguous attitude to his own ideals:

Only unconsciously, however, is the Englishman willing to accept his own ideal. If he were aware that the fun of the comedian was more than fun he would be unable to accept it; just as, in all probability, if the comedian were aware that his fun was more than fun he might be unable to perform it.⁴⁵

Eliot has noted two important factors in the evolution of the mythic figures which appear from time to time in England. One factor is a special talent on the part of certain English authors, Ben Jonson, for instance. This talent is "a kind of power, animating Volpone, Busy, Fitzdottrel, and the literary ladies of Epicoene, even Bobadil, which comes from below the intellect, and for which no theory of humors will account."⁴⁶ The other important element is the fundamental nature of the Englishman himself:

Humour is distinctively English. No one can be so aware of the environment of Stupidity as the Englishman; no other nationality perhaps provides so dense an environment as the English. The intelligent Englishman is more aware of loneliness, has more reserves, than the man of intelligence of any other nation. Wit is public, it is in the object; humour (I am speaking only of real humour) is the instinctive attempt of a sensitive mind to protect beauty against ugliness; and to protect itself against stupidity. The older British humour is of this sort; in that great but decadent humourist, Dickens, and in some of his contemporaries it is on the way to the imbecilities of Punch. [Wyndham] Lewis's humour is near to Dickens, but on the right side, for it is not too remote from Ben Jonson.⁴⁷

Sweeney has none of the crassly comic characteristics of other of Eliot's satiric figures; for example, the title characters of "Burbank with a Baedeker: Bleistein with a Cigar," or Wauchope, Klipstein, Krumpacker, Swarts, and Snow -- who appear in Sweeney Agonistes. These characters seem to be working on a more conscious level, a level almost totally comic. Eliot seems to have intended such characters to be direct descendents of the worn out myth, and as such to act as a contrasting background to the new myth, as represented by Sweeney. Sweeney is a making new of the old by transformation. He is a cross between the grossly introverted Gerontian and the merely money-made and partly money-mad Bleistein. Sweeney does not worship in a stained glass church of Middle England; instead:

Sweeney shifts from ham to ham
 Stirring the water in his bath.
 The masters of the subtle schools
 Are controversial, polymath.⁴⁸

Humour as it is transformed in Sweeney is a new untested thing, for Sweeney is half educated, half aware in a way that his predecessors were not. Yet in his very indifference to the senseless anxieties of the world there lurks "the instinctive attempt of a sensitive mind to protect beauty against ugliness; and to protect itself against stupidity."⁴⁹ This instinctiveness of attitude is touched on in the fragmentary ritual drama, Sweeney Agonistes:

Sweeney: I tell you again it don't apply
 Death or life or life or death
 Death is life and life is death
 I gotta use words when I talk to you
 We all gotta do what we gotta do
 We're gona sit here and drink this booze
 We're gona sit here and have a tune
 We're gona stay and we're gona go
 And somebody's gotta pay the rent

Doris: I know who

Sweeney: But that's nothing to me and nothing to you.⁵⁰

It is Sweeney's inscrutability, his savage contempt of fate, his unpredictability that make him the new barbarian.⁵¹

Sweeney is a satire on the civilized man for it is Sweeney who, by virtue of his barbarity, knows how to live in the modern urban chaos without the neuroses of civilized man. Sweeney is one of Wyndham Lewis's children of the new age:

No time has ever been more carefully demarcated from the one it succeeds than the time we have entered on has been by the Great War of 1914-18. It is built solidly behind us. All the conflicts and changes of the last ten years, intellectual and other, are terribly symbolized by it. To us, in its immense meaningless shadow, it appears like a mountain range that has suddenly risen as a barrier, which should be interpreted as an indication of our path. There is no passage back across that to the lands of yesterday. . . . those whose interest lies all ahead, whose credentials are in the future, move in this abrupt shadow with satisfaction, forward, and away from the sealed and obstructed past.⁵²

Sweeney also has a shadow which lies, not like a trail of events behind him, but like a dark silhouette of the indefinite future.

Although the future is indefinite, and although Sweeney's behaviour in any particular situation may be unpredictable, the possible consequences of some present conditions are occasionally apparent. Eliot quotes W.H.R. Rivers to prove the possible debilitating effects of a life which escapes from reality into dream (especially the dream world of the cinema), or of a life which undergoes the imposition of alien cultural patterns:

He [the working man] will now go to the cinema, where his mind is lulled by continuous senseless music and continuous action too rapid for the brain to act upon, and will receive, without giving, in that same listless apathy with which the middle and upper classes regard any entertainment of the nature of art. He will also have lost some of his interest in life. Perhaps this will be the only solution. In an interesting essay in the volume of Essays on the Depopulation of Melanesia, the psychologist W.H.R. Rivers adduced evidence which has led him to believe that the natives of that unfortunate archipelago

are dying out principally for the reason that the 'Civilization' forced upon them has deprived them of all interest in life. They are dying from pure boredom. When every theatre has been replaced by 100 cinemas, when every musical instrument has been replaced by 100 gramophones, when electrical ingenuity has made it possible for every child to hear its bedtime stories from a loudspeaker, when applied science has done everything possible with the materials on this earth to make life as interesting as possible, it will not be surprising if the population of the entire civilized world rapidly follows the fate of the Melanesians.⁵³

Eliot has described how Sweeney would react if placed in an alien culture, that of island life like the Melanesians. Sweeney has a vitality which makes him proof against boredom. His friend, Doris, has no such reserve. She feels that island life would bore her (perhaps as western civilization has bored the Melanesians). Sweeney ironically describes the conditions of the elemental state which, in various romantic guises (perhaps not unlike the cinema), provided escapist dreams in an urban age:

Sweeney: There's no telephones
 There's no gramophones
 There's no motor cars
 No two-seaters, no six-seaters,
 No Citroen, no Rolls-Royce.
 Nothing to eat but the fruit as it grows.
 Nothing to see but the palmtrees one way
 And the sea the other way,
 Nothing to hear but the sound of the surf.
 Nothing at all but three things

Doris: What things?

Sweeney: Birth, and copulation, and death.
 That's all, that's all, that's all, that's all,
 Birth, and copulation, and death.

Doris: I'd be bored.

They all, however participate in the same experience and are similarly affected by that experience. They are affected in such a way that social differentiation ceases to prevent them from taking on one another's characteristics. Together they form an interwoven pattern the significance of which is apparent only through an examination of the whole. Eliot attributed this melding of social classes to the disappearance of traditional institutions like the music-hall:

The middle classes, in England as elsewhere, under democracy, are morally dependent upon the aristocracy, and the aristocracy are subordinate to the middle class, which is gradually absorbing and destroying them. The lower class still exists; but perhaps it will not exist for long. In the music-hall comedians they find the expression and dignity of their own lives; and this is not found in the most elaborate and expensive revue. In England, at any rate, the revue expresses almost nothing. With the decay of the music-hall, with the encroachment of the cheap and rapid-breeding cinema, the lower classes will tend to drop into the same state of protoplasm as the bourgeoisie. The working man who went to the music-hall and saw Marie Lloyd and joined in the chorus was himself performing part of the act; he was engaged in that collaboration of the audience with the artist which is necessary in all art and most obviously in dramatic art.⁵⁸

In The Waste Land Eliot uses three basic devices to express this situation of melding of social classes. These devices have in common with one another a kind of impersonal interplay of parts. The devices used are a pack of cards, a game of chess, and a machine.

The first device, the pack of cards, is used in lines

43 to 59 to introduce the principle characters. Whether a pack of cards is used to tell a fortune or to play a game, it is necessary that the cards be distributed so they can function together. The cards are dealt in lines 43 to 59 and are thereby brought into a pattern relation or situation which involves them with one another.

The characters introduced by the cards are: the "drowned Phoenician Sailor," "Belladonna," who is "the lady of situations," "The man with three staves," "the one-eyed merchant" and his contraband. Also introduced is "the Wheel," and mention is made of the absence of "The Hanged Man." Only three of the cards mentioned are from the famous Tarot pack. As with the apocalyptic myth, Eliot has used only the aspects of the Tarot mythology that suit his purposes.

The cards are used to establish a unity of situation among the characters by a framing device. The holder of the first card, which is "the drowned Phoenician Sailor," is warned of his fate only after all the other cards are dealt. All the characters are involved in the destiny of one person. The framing device is strengthened by mention of "the Wheel" which recurs later in the poem (320) in the experience which brings the sailor and his fate together: "O you who turn the wheel and look to windward,/ Consider Phlebas, who was

once handsome and tall as you."

The second device used to create unity of situation is the game of chess. The pieces of a chess set, whether queen or pawn, are each involved in the same struggle for victory. Yet even when the victory has been won only one or two words have been uttered; check, or checkmate. There is no real communication between the pieces. Section Two: "A Game of Chess," provides what is basically a problem of communication that is experienced on both the upper and lower class social levels. The characters involved do speak but they say either nothing of value or nothing that can be readily understood. They are really speaking to themselves. When there is something important to be said it is said either enigmatically as in lines 115-116: "I think we are in rats' alley/ Where the dead men lost their bones." or it is shouted, as the recurrent command in lines 141-172: "HURRY UP PLEASE IT'S TIME."

The experience of lack of communication is reinforced, in lines 77 to 105, by the use of erotic myths. Sex may be regarded as a tool for the highest form of communication, love. Yet the myths portray either a frustrated love like that between Antony and Cleopatra (evoked by line 77: "The Chair she sat in, like a burnished throne. . . ."), or a loveless use of sex as in line 99-100: "The change of

Philomel, by the barbarous king/ So rudely forced. . .").

The frustration of a full expression of love through sex is put into a modern context by the reference to abortion pills in lines 158-164.

In lines 215 to 256 the situation is developed by the metaphor of the machine. The body is redesigned in both its movements and its various paraphernalia into the likeness of a machine. A word is not spoken between the two lovers involved in the scene. The love action takes place as little more than a mechanical function, and is smoothed over "with automatic hand" (line 255). The situation is the same as that of "A Game of Chess," except with the focus entirely on love-making, and with an even more insistently interwoven theme of the historical universality of the situation. Not only is there no moral sense, there is not even the possibility of one. This is the situation which St. Augustine found when he went burning to Carthage (307). The life of a machine is neither painful nor rewarding. Those who find themselves in a machine situation are neither dead nor alive.

Sections IV and V focus situation on one person. Section IV, as examined with relation to Carthage,⁵⁹ directs the focus to the person himself, while Section V as seen in the discussion of supra-temporal space, directs the focus to

the person's environment.

The situation which composes the pattern of relations that are the social space of the city is a situation which cuts across both social and historical planes. It is a situation which can be expressed in Tarot myth, Greek myth, or modern image. The situation involves the morality of commerce, as in the case of "the drowned Phoenician Sailor" in whose fate everyone is involved, and the morality of sex. Money and love are the material, common to all levels of society and all periods of history, out of which certain basic myths of every time and place are made. The modern, mythic expression of money and sex finds a unity in the machine. The machine is a symbol of man's desire for commercial improvement, while the characteristics of machine operation express the modern attitude toward sex. Eliot, in a discussion of the universal problem of morality, traced one source of the problem to "the irresponsible and undeveloped nature" of man:

The tragedy of The Changeling is an eternal tragedy, as permanent as Oedipus or Antony and Cleopatra; it is the tragedy of the not naturally bad but irresponsible and undeveloped nature, caught in the consequences of its own action. In every age and in every civilization there are instances of the same thing: the unmoral nature, suddenly trapped in the inexorable toils of morality -- of morality not made by man but by Nature -- and forced to take the consequences of an act which it had planned light-heartedly. Beatrice is not a moral creature; she becomes moral only by being damned. Our conventions are not the same as those which Middleton assumed for his play. But the possibility of that frightful discovery of morality remains permanent.⁶⁰

CHAPTER FOUR

POINT CENTRE OF THE WASTE LAND

If the Waste Land of the poem is experienced as an arrangement of perceptual patterns -- physical, temporal, supra-temporal and social -- the point centre of these patterns can be found in lines 60 to 76. It is the point at which London Bridge crosses the Thames River, the bringing together of the two landmarks that have become symbols of London throughout the world.

London Bridge has a functional use. It is a device by which people move over a specific space. It remains, or is replaced little by little like the river which flows beneath it. It therefore provides an historical anchor for the shifting image of the city. London bridge has, then, both an historical and physical significance which allow it to be regarded as the city's emotional centre.

In lines 60-76 London Bridge becomes an entrance to that complex phenomenon, the city centre. The city is seen under the cover of brown fog from the south end of the bridge. The unreality of the scene, the spectre-like image created by

the fog, takes on a Baudelarian tone:

Dans les plis sinueux des vieilles capitales,
Où tout, même l'horreur, tourne aux enchantements,
Je guette, obéissant à mes humeurs fatales,
Des êtres singuliers, décrépits et charmants.
(*"Les Petites Vieilles"*, 1-4)

The fog acts, then, as a kind of burial shroud covering the space into which the crowd flows:

Unreal City,
Under the brown fog of a winter dawn,
A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,
I had not thought death had undone so many.
(60-63)

As Eliot's remark, quoted earlier, indicates, the line, "I had not thought death had undone so many," has been borrowed from Dante in order to "establish a relationship between the medieval inferno and modern life."¹ Hell, in Christian theology, means the loss of eternal life. Hell then is a kind of everlasting process of death. Life in a city is an equivalent kind of death, it is "the living death of modern civilization."² The city is an earthly hell. This state of death is opposite to that in which the city-dwellers find themselves in lines 322 to 330:

After the torch light red on sweaty faces
After the frosty silence in the gardens
After the agony in stony places
The shouting and the crying
Prison and palace and reverberation
Of thunder of spring over distant mountains
He who was living is now dead
We who were living are now dying
With a little patience.

These lines follow the ordeal of "Death by Water." The person who dies in that ordeal, the "drowned Phoenician Sailor," is presumably already dead. The result is that death itself dies. There is however, some ambiguity about this situation since it cannot be stated definitely that the person who dies by water is already dead. This ambiguity may be a deliberate attempt to point out the ambiguity of the concepts of: death in life on an earthly plane, (63); and, death in life on a spiritual plane (329-330).

The kind of death in life which is endured in the passage over the bridge is a process, a transferring from one condition to another. London Bridge is thus not only a physical space as entrance to the city centre, it is also a supra-temporal space, a crossing from one life to another. "Sighs, short and infrequent [are] exhaled" (64). This breath is a sign of life. The sigh, too, is a sign of life, the life that is aware of pain, that is self-conscious. This small manifestation of individuality is made more apparent by a momentary focus on the individuals of the crowd, instead of on the crowd as a whole: "and each man fixed his eyes before his feet" (65).

London Bridge is also a temporal space, for it leads back in time and marks as it goes, significant points in the

process of death which results from the struggle for power.

The crowd:

Flowed up the hill and down King William Street,
To where St. Mary Woolnoth kept the hours
With a dead sound on the final stroke of nine.
There I saw one I knew, and stopped him crying: 'Stetson!
'You who were with me in the ships at Mylae!

(66-70)

The points of struggle are: the death of the monarchy, and the death of Saxon control of England as symbolized by two different English kings named William; the death of Christianity's religious and moral power in England; and the death of one great financial power, Phoenicia, at the hands of a rising power, Rome. The same process of death is at work today, for the figure of modern financial power and success, Stetson, will some day become a victim.

The physical, temporal, and supra-temporal spaces are, then, focused in a central space, a point centre of the Waste Land, which is London Bridge. This central space, or pattern of relations between perceptual images is a space that is flow or process, a kinetic image. This kinetic image expresses the experience, by the crowd, of motion towards death, at the physical, temporal, and supra-temporal levels. What more appropriate image than a bridge could have been used to express the nature of these spatial patterns.

The bridge as a union of the physical, temporal, and supra-temporal spaces, unites with these spaces the social space or situation; for it is on all these levels, or in all these spaces that the social experience takes place, the experience of death in life. The crowd, as the specific image of social space, whose special characteristic is a commonness or community of situation, experiences together in the physical space a death of the senses in fog, in the temporal space the death of civilizations in power struggles, in the supra-temporal space the death of tradition which is the death of the meaning of life and therefore hell, and in the social space, that is, among people, in their community of situation an inability to communicate, a death of intercourse, a death of love which is also hell.

The process of death has a predictability about it. It is expected to manifest itself in a specific way and space, and in a specific period of time:

'That corpse you planted in your garden,
Has it begun to sprout? Will it bloom this year?
(71-72)

The space of the process of death, the space of the Waste Land is a garden which nourishes death. The city itself feeds its own doom.

The predictability of the process of death is not,

however, inevitability. The process can be killed by "the sudden frost" (73), that is, die a death by water. Such a death would make possible the spiritual death in life described in lines 322-330, the new kind of death which occurs after "Death by Water" (312-321), or "after the frosty silence in the gardens" (323).

The process of death could also be killed, or rooted out again by "the Dog. . . that's friend to men,/ . . . with his nails. . . ." (74-75). This animal is probably related to "My friend. . ." (403) who is involved in the experience of the first thunder "DA/Datta" (401-402), the experience of giving. The Dog and the friend seem by implication to be related to "'You! hypocrite lecteur! -- mon semblable, -- mon frere!'" (77), the person to whom the experience of the poem is given.

In so far as the process of death can be rooted out again (74) this process of death is part of a larger process which also includes death by water and the spiritual death in life. The total process occurs within the garden, and would indeed seem to be the condition of the garden or city space.

The river Thames completes the image of the central space, for, while it is not seen in lines 60-76, it is presumed to be flowing under the bridge. As an object which by

nature flows the river is an image of pure process. The river leads from one end of the Waste Land to the other, and then out to the farthest points away from point centre. The river thus ties the space of the Waste Land together and relates that space to the central space.

The river first comes into view at the beginning of Section Three, "The Fire Sermon." Its absence up to that point may be equivalent to the absence of water in the supratemporal space until the rains of line 395. The main function of the river in Section Three seems to be to provide a line of orientation for moving back and forth through the city. The river also ties together the contemplation of the ruins of civilization in lines 172 to 195 and the music of the gramophone, a symbol of modern civilization (257-311). The river as process underlines the change to the modern way of life with its mechanical human beings (214 to 217) and its loveless sex. The process of change is a change in the attitude of the people themselves, especially with regard to sex. There are at least eight occasions in the section which bring the problem of sex into view (193, 203-206, 214, 231-248, 279, 291-294, 295-299, 300-306). The intensity of process as manifested in human passion is brought into direct focus in the closing lines of the section (307-311):

To Carthage then I came

Burning burning burning burning
O Lord Thou pluckest me out
O Lord Thou pluckest

burning

The process of change in ways of life within civilization leads, by means of the symbol of process, the river, to the sea, the experience of the meaning of life, the "overwhelming question,"³ of "Death by Water" (Section Four). To value the meaning of life is to cause the forces of death in civilization to suffer death themselves:

Gentile or Jew
O you who turn the wheel and look to windward,
Consider Phlebas, who was once handsome and tall as you.
(319-321)

These lines complete the focus on process associated with the river. Their command has already been fulfilled in lines 173 to 202. The person involved in that experience contemplates the things of death, in a space that is free from the debris of modern life (175 to 181), and in the season of winter which is the time of nature's death (190):

Musing upon the king my brother's wreck
And on the king my father's death before him,
White bodies naked on the low damp ground
And bones cast in a little low dry garret,
Rattled by the rat's foot only, year to year.

Sweeney, Mrs. Porter, and her daughter provide, in their

supposedly heedless way of life, a contrast to the contemplation of death and the meaning of life (196-202). They are at the back of the one who contemplates. They have no connection with his life except as objects of observation.

The process of death is, then, the basic process of the city. The city is the garden in which the corpse sprouts (71). The person who perceives the scene (298), the observer of the perceptual structure or patterns, the spaces of the city, is the prophet figure of the poem. He too is involved in what Lynch calls the "pattern relations."⁴ He appears as "son of man" (20), as Madame Sosostriis (43), as Tiresias (218) and as an anonymous observer:

'You gave me hyacinths first a year ago;
'They called me the hyacinth girl
-- Yet when we came back, late, from the Hyacinth garden,
Your arms full, and your hair wet, I could not
Speak, and my eyes failed, I was neither
Living nor dead, and I knew nothing,
Looking into the heart of light, the silence.

(35-41)

After the vision of the city, the Hyacinth garden, and after the process of death has suffered death by water ("your hair wet"), the observer experiences a vision of process itself ("heart of light"), the experience of perception without an object of perception. His vision of the process of death is based on the process of perception.

CONCLUSION

It is appropriate that the central experience of The Waste Land, the process of death and the process of perception is exposed by an examination of point centre, the Thames - London Bridge complex. Just as Thames and London Bridge are means of orientation within London, so they provide points of key poetic intensity in the poem which orient interpretation of the poem. Eliot has thus designed his poem to operate like a city, and provide, even in its formal variations of intensity a poetic equivalent of city experience.

The other physical places used in the poem can be seen to operate in the same "city" manner. Just as main streets and sign posts lead to a city's centre or to its outer limits, so the place names function either as occasions of involvement close to the central experience of the poem such as "the dull canal" (189), a place of contemplation connected with the Thames; or, as occasions of escape from the centre of the city, to places like the Starnbergersee, Margate, Richmond, Kew, and the Metropole.

The place names exist then, as satellites which can be charted in a series of diminishing circles toward the centre,

and which serve to relate localized experiences to the central experience of The Waste Land. They provide a skeleton map of the important land marks and routes needed to get around in the poem. The place names mark out a specifically designed space within the reader's mind within and around which the experience of the poem takes place, just as a real city exists in people's minds as a series of subjectively arranged and interpreted perceptions.

The actual experience of the total pattern, as Eliot has made it happen in the poem, remains to be examined. The total city arrangement of The Waste Land can be experienced only by a complete reading of the poem, after which it exists as a reference map for future rereadings. Just as a first-time visitor to a strange city comes to its outskirts and then finds some fixed point in the city with which he becomes familiar and by which he orients himself, so Eliot has created the outskirts of The Waste Land at the Starnbergersee near the opening of Section One. Then, after examining the strangeness of the city, and introducing its people, Eliot has established a fixed point at the city centre. The focus of the opening section, "The Burial of the Dead," is, then, one which narrows from the outskirts of the city to the central area. This process of narrowing is carried even further to a sharp

focus on the typical interior environments and states of mind of typical Waste Land citizens in the two scenes of Section Two. Section Two is a means of gaining concrete familiarity with the vacant state of mind, the death of communication, which has been seen from the exterior in the crowd flowing over London Bridge. Death is the process perceived at point centre and inextricably associated with point centre, the centre of orientation established by Eliot at the end of Section One.

The Thames, because of its junction with London Bridge, is also a means of orientation. One can always return to London Bridge if one keeps the Thames in sight, which is to say one can, for the moment, forget one's primary point of orientation, the bridge, and examine the city from new points of view. There are no complicated sets of directions for reorientation.

London Bridge as a point of orientation has been forgotten as Section Three opens. The focus is now on the Thames alone. Continuity with previous perceptions of the city is maintained by constant reminders of the process of death. Focus narrows from the river as a whole to a point on Regent's canal. The poem does not establish for certain or whether the point is at the canal's entrance to the river, or whether

this "dull canal" is up or down stream from London Bridge, but no matter, one merely retraces one's steps along the canal to the river and along the river back which ever way one came, if re-orientation is desired.

The focus at Regents canal is, like the focuses in Section Two, static. Here the emptiness of the outdoor environment that is established reflects the earlier emptiness of mind. But here, the mind helps establish the actual place (the double mention of king marks the "dull canal" as Regent's Canal). Mere vacancy of mind has become transformed to awareness of death. The focus cuts to Mrs. Porter, and cuts again, to Mr. Eugenides. This change of place results in a loss of orientation. The familiarity of the scene, however, (lines 207-8 repeat lines 60-1 nearly word for word) suggests a proximity to London Bridge. The possibility of orientation, for the moment, is not far off but is soon completely destroyed, or else merely presumed; for the people brought into focus are long time inhabitants who, if asked, can point the way back to the river or Bridge. For escape from the love scene (230-248) one follows the music of the city, its horns, engines, and screeching tires. Then the music of the fishmen is heard. The sound leads to the wharves and re-orientation with the Thames. Orientation can be established by oral landmarks as

well as by visual ones.

The focus now is visual. It shifts to a view of the Thames from the river itself, and then to a view of the city from the river. The ancient buildings of the city, as seen from the river, provide an orientation in time, as do the buildings seen from London Bridge, or the ancient cities seen in the supra-temporal space (375-376). Orientation in time seems always to be simultaneous as if all times were simultaneous, as if all times were being lived together in a single spread out space, a space which is early twentieth-century London as it appeared to Eliot. The poetic implication would seem to be that people are hardly aware of their past, even when its physical remains jut out at them. Time orientation in a modern metropolis, where re-building is continual, is almost impossible, and its objective correlative in poetry so difficult that even for a city like London, pieces of period poetry must be borrowed to reinforce the effect.

The river scene concludes with three quick focuses in succession, first at the Thames' point of entry into London from the West, second at a point level with central London, and finally at the point where the Thames enters the sea. Together these little scenes give a picture of the total length of the Waste Land but are also the last orientation

with the city which the reader has in terms of usual city perceptions.

Sections Four and Five provide an orientation to the condition of the city rather than to its outline. The sea of Section Four suggests the inborn Waste Lander lost (at sea) in the ever growing and shifting suburbs of what is at its center a reasonably well defined city. The desert of Section Five suggests the meaningless piles of rock which city buildings are and have been through the ages (ll. 372-7):

What is the city over the mountains
Cracks and reforms and bursts in the violet air
Falling towers
Jerusalem Athens Alexandria
Vienna London
Unreal. . . .

A proper re-orientation out of the confusion which the modern city has become will demand a totally new look at the city, another way of ordering one's perception of the city based on a totally new concept of the city itself. The old arrangement has worn out (ll. 426-7):

Shall I at least set my lands in order?
London Bridge is falling down falling down falling
down. . . .

Lynch points out that a total remoulding of environment can be accomplished by the powerful forces of twentieth-century civilization:

Primitive man was forced to improve his environmental image by adapting his perception to the given landscape. He could effect minor changes in his environment with cairns, beacons, or tree blazes, but substantial modifications for visual clarity or visual interconnection were confined to house sites or religious enclosures. Only powerful civilizations can begin to act on their total environment at a significant scale. The conscious remolding of the large-scale physical environment has been possible only recently, and so the problem of environmental imageability is a new one. Technically, we can now make completely new landscapes in a brief time, as in the Dutch polders. Here the designers are already at grips with the question of how to form the total scene so that it is easy for the human observer to identify its parts and to structure the whole.¹

FOOTNOTES

Introduction

¹ Epigraphs:

Boswell, Life of Johnson, II, 131.

The Waste Land, 374-377, All quotations of The Waste Land are from the original version in Criterion 1.1 (October 1922), 50-64. The numbering of lines used in quoting The Waste Land corresponds to that in The Complete Poems and Plays. All other quotations of Eliot's poetical works are from The Complete Poems and Plays.

"Humanism of Irving Babbitt", 130.

² "Eeldrop and Appleplex", I, 7-8.

³ Ibid., 8.

⁴ Lynch, 8.

⁵ An analysis of the spatial awareness of ten French writers is to be found in Georges Poulet, The Interior Distance. A study similar to Poulet's is to be found in J. Hillis Miller, The Disappearance of God.

CHAPTER ONE

¹ Miller, Disappearance of God, 4.

² Hawthorne, 208-209.

³ Little Review, 5.4 (August, 1918), 48.

⁴ Egoist, 5.5 (May, 1918), 69. This same social consciousness is manifested in a later work, "Little Gidding," 126-128:

. . . our concern was speech; and speech impelled us
To purify the dialect of the tribe
And urge the mind to aftersight and foresight,

⁵Howarth, 129.

⁶"Humanism of Irving Babbitt", 130.

⁷"The Idea of a Literary Review", Criterion, (January, 1926), 5.

⁸Howarth, 72.

⁹"What Dante Means to Me", 126.

¹⁰Ibid., 125.

¹¹Tyro, 2 (1922), 13.

¹²Howarth, 127.

¹³Ibid., 107.

¹⁴"To Criticize the Critic", 18.

¹⁵Ibid., 22.

¹⁶"What Dante Means to Me", 126.

¹⁷Egoist, 4.11 (December, 1917), 67.

¹⁸Howarth, 36.

¹⁹Ibid., 7.

²⁰Ibid., 41.

²¹Ibid., 38.

²²Ibid., 40-42.

²³Ibid., 41.

²⁴Ibid., 43-50.

²⁵Ibid., 50.

- ²⁶Howarth, 47.
- ²⁷Ibid., 42.
- ²⁸Ibid., 63.
- ²⁹Kenner, The Invisible Poet, 4.
- ³⁰See above, pages 12-13.
- ³¹Ezra Pound: His Metric and Poetry, 177.
- ³²Kenner, The Invisible Poet, 61.
- ³³Donald Gallup, T.S. Eliot: a Bibliography, #C57, C62. C63, pp. 82-83.
- ³⁴III, (Chicago: Benton, 1963), 690-691.
- ³⁵"Tarr", The Egoist, 5.8 (September, 1918), 105-106.
- ³⁶Lewis, Caliph's Design, 35.
- ³⁷Kenner, The Invisible Poet, 65.
- ³⁸"To Criticize the Critic", 17.
- ³⁹Lewis, "Early London Environment", 34.
- ⁴⁰Ibid., 34.
- ⁴¹Hemingway, A Moveable Feast, 111. The letters of Pound concerning this activity are printed in The Letters of Ezra Pound, 172-176.
- ⁴²"Verse Pleasant and Unpleasant", The Egoist, 5.3 (March, 1918), 43.
- ⁴³Dial, 70.4 (April 1921), 451.
- ⁴⁴"The Unity of European Culture", 117-118.
- ⁴⁵Lewis, "Early London Environment", 28-31. In Blasting and Bombardiering, 283, Lewis described Eliot as "a sleek, tall attractive transatlantic apparition -- with a sort of Gioconda smile." See also Eliot's article, "Wyndham Lewis" in Hudson Review, 10.2 (Summer, 1957), 167-170.

⁴⁶Dial, 70.6 (June, 1921), 689.

⁴⁷This passage is quoted by Lewis's publisher on the back cover of Wyndham Lewis, Time and Western Man.

⁴⁸"Observations", Egoist, 5.5 (May, 1918), 69.

⁴⁹Lewis, "Early London Environment", 30.

⁵⁰Hemingway, 108-110. This account is undoubtedly coloured by Hemingway's response to Lewis's essay, "The Dumb Ox: a Study of Ernest Hemingway."

In Shakespeare and Company, 83, Sylvia Beech describes Hemingway's reaction to the Lewis article:

Wyndham Lewis succeeded in making Joyce squirm. And his article on Hemingway entitled "The Dumb Ox," which the subject of it picked up in my bookshop, I regret to say, roused him to such anger that he punched the heads off three dozen tulips, a birthday gift. As a result, the vase upset its contents over the books, after which Hemingway sat down at my desk and wrote a cheque payable to Sylvia Beech for a sum that covered the damages twice over.

⁵¹The Egoist, 1.4 (April, 1914), 140.

⁵²Lewis, Time and Western Man, 39.

⁵³Ezra Pound: His Metric and Poetry, 174-175.

⁵⁴Lewis, Caliph's Design, 29. See also page 52 for a direct reference to the Futurists.

⁵⁵Little Review, 4.8 (December, 1917), 9. The Eliot poems mentioned appeared under the heading "Poems" in Blast, 2 (July, 1915), 48-51.

⁵⁶Little Review, 5.10-11 (February-March, 1919), 48.

⁵⁷"London Letter", Dial, 71.4 (October, 1921), 453.

⁵⁸The Waste Land, 215-223.

⁵⁹See above, page 27 and note.

⁶⁰Lewis, Caliph's Design, 16.

⁶¹Ulysses, 77.

⁶²See below, page 68-69.

⁶³Lewis, Caliph's Design, 40.

⁶⁴"A Brief Treatise on the Criticism of Poetry", 9.

⁶⁵"Tradition and the Individual Talent", 49.

CHAPTER TWO

¹See above, page 7.

²"The Social Function of Poetry", 9-10.

³See above, page 3.

⁴See above, page 28.

⁵"Tradition and the Individual Talent", 51-52.

⁶"Philip Massinger", 123.

⁷Ibid., 137.

⁸"Ben Jonson", 106.

⁹Ibid., 106.

¹⁰Ibid., 121.

¹¹"Hamlet and His Problems", 100.

¹²"Baudelaire", 426.

¹³Pound, "Vorticism", 84. The origin of the term, Vorticism, is discussed on page 92:

The image is not an idea. It is a radiant node or cluster; it is what I can, and must perforce, call a VORTEX, from which, and through which, and into which, ideas are constantly rushing. In decency one can only call it a VORTEX. And from this necessity came the name "vorticism." Nomina sunt consequentia rerum, and never was that statement of Aquinas more true than in the case of the vorticist movement.

¹⁴Tyro, 1 (1922), 4. The word, Morals, is capitalized in original.

¹⁵"The Literature of Politics", 139-140.

¹⁶The process of leveling was observed by Eliot in "Marie Lloyd" as quoted in the passage below, page 99.

¹⁷"The Classics and the Man of Letters", 148.

¹⁸Tyro, 1 (1922), 4.

¹⁹Idea of a Christian Society, 19.

²⁰"London Letter", Dial, 70.6 (June, 1921), 691.

²¹The Temple Classics: The Inferno of Dante Alighieri, 372-373. Eliot recommended The Temple Classics' text and translation of Dante's The Divine Comedy in the preface to the original book form of his essay, Dante, 13.

²²"Leibniz's Monads and Bradley's Finite Centers", 574-575.

²³Notes towards the Definition of Culture, title page.

²⁴Idea of a Christian Society, 16.

²⁵"Preludes", IV, 2-3.

²⁶"Rhapsody", 8-9.

²⁷"The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock", 8-10.

²⁸Ibid., 6-7.

²⁹"Morning at the Window", 1.

³⁰Choruses from 'The Rock', I, 19-21.

³¹"Portrait of a Lady", 92.

³²"The Hollow Men", 52-56.

³³"Burnt Norton", III, 99-103.

³⁴"Prufrock", 2-3.

³⁵"East Coker", 122.

³⁶"Burnt Norton", 43.

³⁷"East Coker", 101-109.

³⁸"Prufrock", 42-43.

³⁹"Rhapsody", 16-22.

⁴⁰"The Boston Evening Transcript", 1-2.

CHAPTER THREE

¹No event is free of the place within which it occurs. To examine that place or space is to bring the nature of the event into focus. Or, as Georges Poulet has put it in "Michel Deguy ou le lieu comme médiateur de l'être", 120: "pas d'ontologie sans topologie."

²This line reads as quoted in Criterion, 1.1 (October, 1922), 58. In Complete Poems and Plays, 45, the same line reads: "and a clatter and a chatter from within."

³See above, page 13.

⁴These three experiences comprise what the famous Notes on "The Waste Land" refer to as the "Song of the (three) Thames-daughters." The Notes, perhaps with a touch of irony, associate the Thames-daughters with the Rhine-daughters if Wagner's *Götterdämmerung*, III, i. George Williamson's discussion of this matter in A Reader's Guide to T.S. Eliot, 144, brings out the moral implications of these experiences, which implications would seem to apply to the whole of the sexual imagery of this section of the poem:

This refrain of the Rhine-daughters in *Götterdämmerung* ("the judgement of the gods") laments the loss of the Rhinegold or beauty of the river; it performs a similar function here, for other guardians of the gold; and again the poem returns to Wagner to express a theme of desolation. . . .

As the Thames-daughters recount their story, we learn that they, like the Rhine-daughters, have been violated. The scene carries them down the river to the sea, and the moral journey is similar, ending in a state that "can connect Nothing with nothing," that calls its violation merely the "broken fingernails" of people who expect nothing. The syncopation of the chorus to that flippant, modern "la la" repeats the last ironic echo of the gramophone.

⁵"Tradition and the Individual Talent", 52.

⁶See above, page 28.

⁷XXV (Cambridge University Press, 1911), 281-282.

⁸In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries Smyrna was perhaps best known as the brand name of packaged figs.

⁹Compare George Williamson, A Reader's Guide to T.S. Eliot, 134:

When the protagonist mentions "the ships at Mylae," he is associating himself, appropriately enough, with the Phoenician Sailor in a famous engagement of the Punic Wars. We should note the associations with the sea and things Phoenician in the poem: they are part of the protagonist's inheritance.

¹⁰"Ulyses, Order and Myth", Dial., 75.5 (November, 1923), 480-483.

¹¹After Strange Gods, 16-17.

¹²Miller, Disappearance of God, 26.

¹³Lewis, Caliph's Design, 23.

¹⁴The significance of this similarity is heightened by the fact that The Caliph's Design, in which the quotation occurred, was published not long before Eliot began work on The Waste Land.

¹⁵Lethaby, Architecture: an Introduction, 249.

¹⁶Gropius, The New Architecture and the Bauhaus, 24-25.

- ¹⁷Lethaby, Architecture, Nature and Magic, 15-16.
- ¹⁸See above, page 18.
- ¹⁹"What Dante Means to Me", 128.
- ²⁰Lethaby, Architecture, Nature and Magic, 123.
- ²¹Ibid., 124-126.
- ²²Ibid., 63.
- ²³Ibid., 107.
- ²⁴Ibid., 26.
- ²⁵Ibid., 41-47.
- ²⁶Ibid., 102-111.
- ²⁷After Strange Gods, 60.
- ²⁸Kierkegaard, Repetition, 104.
- ²⁹Miller, Disappearance of God, 9.
- ³⁰Lewis, "Essay on the Objective of Plastic Art in Our Time", 35.
- ³¹"Imperfect Critics", 37.
- ³²"Philip Massinger", 143.
- ³³"Four Elizabethan Dramatists", 109.
- ³⁴"Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca", 137.
- ³⁵Ibid., 137.
- ³⁶Ibid., 137.
- ³⁷"Reflections on Contemporary Poetry", Egoist, 4.9 (October, 1917), 133.
- ³⁸"Tarr", Egoist, 5.8 (September, 1918), 105.

³⁹ See above, page 8, the quotation beginning: Mr. Babbitt. . . .

⁴⁰ "The Lesson of Baudelaire", Tyro, 1 (1922), 4. These remarks should be compared with the remarks on Baudelaire from the same essay as quoted above, page 43.

⁴¹ "Sweeney Erect", 25-28.

⁴² Lewis, "Notes on Tyros", Tyro, 1 (1922), 2.

⁴³ "The Romantic Englishman. . . .", Tyro, 1 (1922), 4.

⁴⁴ "Sweeney Erect", 11-20.

⁴⁵ "The Romantic Englishman. . . .", Tyro, 1 (1922), 4.

⁴⁶ "Ben Jonson", 117-118.

⁴⁷ "Tarr", Egoist, 5.8 (September, 1918), 105.

⁴⁸ "Mr. Eliot's Sunday Morning Service", 29-32. The stained glass windows are described in 1-16.

⁴⁹ See above, page 94.

⁵⁰ Sweeney Agonistes, 302-315.

⁵¹ Compare "Sweeney Erect", 29-32:

Tests the razor on his leg
Waiting until the shriek subsides.
The epileptic on the bed
Curves backward, clutching at her sides.

⁵² Lewis, "The Children of the New Age", Tyro, 1 (1922) 3.

⁵³ "Marie Lloyd", 458-459.

⁵⁴ Sweeney Agonistes, 174-196.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 293-295.

⁵⁶ "Marivaux", Art and Letters, 2.2 (Spring, 1919), 83.

⁵⁷ "The Hawthorne Aspect", Little Review, 5.4 (August, 1918), 52.

⁵⁸"Marie Lloyd", 458. Compare Joyce, Finnegans Wake, 435: "Secret satieties and ononymous letters make the great unwatched as bad as their betters."

⁵⁹See above, pages 65-66.

⁶⁰"Thomas Middleton", 163. This essay is interesting in that it includes, as well as a reference to Antony and Cleopatra, a reference (166) to the game of chess in Middleton's Women Beware Women, and also to Middleton's play, A Game at Chess.

CHAPTER FOUR

¹See above, page 74.

²After Strange Gods, 60.

³"Prufrock", 10.

⁴See above, page 3.

CONCLUSION

¹Lynch, Image of the City, 12-13.

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